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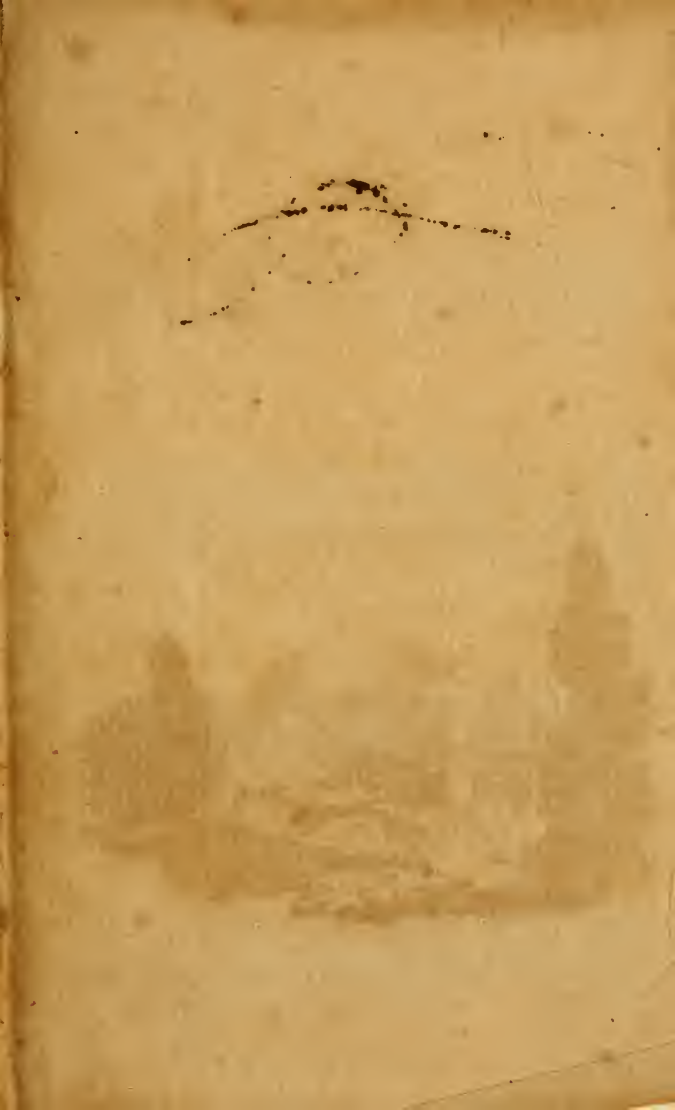

ESSAYS

MORAL AND LITERARY.

Ino BY Breckinridge

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LATE FELLOW OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD.

THE TWELFTH EDITION.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

ΡΗΙΔΙΗ Δ'ΗΠΕΙΤΑ ΠΕΔΕΙ. HESIOD.

NON QUIA DIFFICILIA SUNT, NON AUDEMUS; SED QUIA NON AUDEMUS, DIFFICILIA SUNT.

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ESSAYS,

MORAL AND LITERARY.

No. LXXXII. ON THE MEANS OF READING WITH THE MOST ADVANTAGE.

IT is certain, that there are many ſtudents who impair their health in a continual courſe of reading and literary labour, without any adequate returns of pleaſure or improvement. They read, indeed, becauſe they conſider it as a duty, or becauſe they are endeavouring to accompliſh themſelves for the practice of a profeſſion; but they are ready to confeſs, that the whole tenour of their ſtudies is one continued toil, and that the pleaſure they derive from them is by no means a recompence for exhauſted ſpirits and habitual melancholy.

With a view to relieve ſtudents of this deſcription, who are uſually virtuous and amiable, I will endeavour to ſuggeſt a few hints, which may poſſibly contribute to render their reading more agreeable and advantageous. But I wiſh to premiſe, that in what I now ſay, and in whatever I have ſaid, in the ſtyle of direction and advice, I mean only to offer, not to obtrude; to ſubmit, and not to dictate.

In order to receive the proper advantage from reading, it muſt be rendered a pleaſing employment. Human nature is ſo conſtituted, that no practice will be continued long and regularly, which is not attended with ſome degree of pleaſure. We enter upon a ſtudy which is irkſome and diſguſtful with reluctance, we attend to it ſuperficially and we relinquiſh it without reflecting upon it in a degree ſufficient

for the purpose of improvement. Instead of thinking of it uniformly and steadily, we drive it from our minds as the cause of uneasiness. But the heart and affections, the imagination and the memory, co-operate with the understanding, in deriving all possible advantage from the study which we love.

The first and most important, object is, therefore, to form a strong attachment to those parts of science, or to those books, which our judgment directs us to study. There are various methods conducive to this end; but, perhaps, none are more effectual, than that of conversing with men of sense and genius on the books and the subject which we purpose to examine. There is a warmth and spirit in conversation, which renders subjects, which might otherwise appear cold and lifeless, interesting and animated. When the company is departed, and the conversation at an end, we are naturally inclined to see what has been said in books on the subjects discussed; and the light let in by the preceding conversation is an excellent introduction and guide to our subsequent enquiries made in solitude.

As soon as we have obtained, by reading, a competent knowledge of a book or particular subject, it will contribute greatly to animate us in proceeding still further, if we talk of it either with our equals in attainments, or with the learned and experienced. In such conversation we venture to advance an opinion; our self-love renders us solicitous to maintain it, we seek the aid of a book as an auxiliary, we therefore read it with eager attention; and I believe it will be difficult to avoid loving that which we attend to frequently and with eagerness; so that, in this manner, an attachment to books and literary employments is gradually formed, and what began in labour or necessity becomes the choice, and constitutes a most agreeable pleasure.

Indeed, if we can once fix our attention very closely on a good book, nothing more will be necessary to make us love it: As in nature, when two substances approach each other very nearly, the attraction of cohesion fastens them together; so when the mind attaches itself closely to any subject whatever, it becomes, as it were, united to it, and gravitates towards it with a spontaneous velocity. There is,

indeed, no ſtudy ſo dry, but by fixing our attention upon it, we may at laſt find it capable of affording great delight. Metaphyſics and mathematics, even in their abſtruſeſt parts, are known to give the attentive ſtudent a very exalted ſatisfaction. Thoſe parts then of human learning, which in their nature are more entertaining, cannot fail of being beloved in a high degree, when the mind is cloſely and conſtantly applied to them.

In order to acquire the power and habit of fixing the attention, it will at firſt be neceſſary to ſummon a very conſiderable degree of reſolution. In beginning the ſtudy of a new language, or any book or ſcience, which preſents ideas totally ſtrange, the mind cannot but feel ſome degree of reluctance or diſguſt. But let the ſtudent perſevere; and in a very ſhort time, the diſguſt will vaniſh, and he will be rewarded with entertainment. Till this takes place, let him make it an inviolable rule, however diſagreeable, to read a certain quantity, or for a certain time, and he will infallibly find, that what he entered upon as a taſk, he will continue as his beſt amuſement.

There are many ſtudents who ſpend their days in extracting paſſages from authors, and fairly tranſcribing them in their common-place book; a mode of ſtudy truly miſerable, which ſeldom repays the ſtudent either with profit or pleaſure, which waſtes his time, and wears out his eyes and his conſtitution. I moſt ſeriouſly adviſe all thoſe, who have been led to think that the exerciſe of the hand can impreſs ideas on the brain; who interrupt their attention by copying; who torture themſelves in abridging, and who think, by filling their pocket-books, that they ſhall enrich their underſtandings, to ſtop while they have eyes to ſee, or fingers to write. They have totally miſtaken the road to learning; and, if they proceed in the way too long a time, they may ſuffer ſuch injuries in it as ſhall diſable them from returning, or ſeeking a better. After many years ſpent in this wretched labour, it is no wonder that they cloſe their books, and make the old complaint of vanity and vexation. Nothing really ſerves us in reading, but what the mind makes its own by reflection and memory. That which is tranſcribed, is not in the leaſt more appropriated than when

it ſtood in the printed page. It is an error, if any ſuppoſe, that by the act of marking the words on paper with a pen, the ideas are more clearly marked on the brain than by an attentive and repeated peruſal.

The beſt method of extracting and epitomizing, is to expreſs the author's ideas, after ſhutting his book, in our own words. In this exerciſe, the memory is exerted, and the ſtyle improved. We make what we write our own; we think, we are active, and we do not condemn ourſelves to an employment merely manual and mechanical. But after all, whatever a few may ſay, write, or think to the contrary, it is certain, that the greateſt ſcholars were content with reading, without making either extracts or epitomes. They were ſatisfied with what remained in their minds after a diligent peruſal, and when they wrote, they wrote their own. Reading is, indeed, moſt juſtly called the food of the mind. Like food, it muſt be digeſted and aſſimilated; it muſt ſhew its nutritive power by promoting growth and ſtrength, and by enabling the mind to bring forth ſound and vigorous productions. It muſt be converted *in ſuccum et ſanguinem*, into juice and blood, and not make its appearence again in the form in which it was originally imbibed. It is indeed true, and the inſtance may be brought in oppoſition to my doctrine, that Demoſthenes tranſcribed Thucydides eight times with his own hand; but it ſhould be remembered, that Demoſthenes flouriſhed long before printing was diſcovered, and that he was induced to tranſcribe, Thucydides not only for the ſake of improvement, but alſo for the ſake of multiplying copies of a favourite author.

A due degree of variety will contribute greatly to render reading agreeable. For though it is true that not more than one or two books ſhould be read at once, yet when they are finiſhed, it will be proper, if any wearineſs is felt, to take up an author who writes in a different ſtyle, or on a different ſubject; to change from poetry to proſe, and from proſe to poetry; to intermix the moderns with the ancients; alternately to lay down the book and to take up the pen; and ſometimes to lay them both down, and enter with alacrity into agreeable company and public diverſions. The mind, after a little ceſſation, returns to books with all the voracious

eagerneſs of a literary hunger. But the intermiſſions muſt not be long or frequent enough to form a habit of idleneſs or diſſipation.

He who would read with pleaſure (and I repeat, that all who read with real profit muſt read with pleaſure,) will attend to the times of the day, and the ſeaſons of the year. The morning has been univerſally approved as the beſt time for ſtudy; the afternoon may be moſt advantageouſly ſpent in improving converſation. Thoſe faculties, which before dinner are capable of engaging in the acuteſt and ſublimeſt diſquiſitions, are found, by general experience, to be comparatively dull and ſtupid after it. "I know not how it "is," ſaid a celebrated writer, "but all my philoſophy, in "which I was ſo warmly engaged in the morning, appears "like nonſenſe as ſoon as I have dined."

Very hot weather is particularly unfavourable to reading. The months of July, Auguſt, and September, are by no means the ſeaſons in which the fruits of the mind arrive at maturity. A rigid philoſopher will perhaps maintain, that the mental faculties are not to be affected by the viciſſitudes of cold and heat; but who will liſten to philoſophy, who is already convinced by actual experience? It is indeed remarkable, that theſe months are ſelected for vacation in the houſes of legiſlature, in in courts of law, and in the ſeats of learning. In cold and inclement weather, when we are driven to the fire-ſide for comfort, we find that delight in our books, which, in the vernal and autumnal ſeaſon, we ſeek in the ſunſhine, and in the ſweets of rural ſcenery. We no longer roam abroad, we collect our ſcattered ideas, and find, in the exerciſe of our faculties, that delight, which is the conſequence and reward of exerting in a proper method the natural energies of the divine particle which breathes within us.

But at all hours and in all ſeaſons, if we can reſtrain the licentious rovings of the fancy, ſooth the paſſions of the heart, and command our attention, ſo as to concentre it on the ſubject we examine, we ſhall be ſure to find it amply rewarded. Attend cloſely, and cloſe attention to any worthy ſubject will always produce ſolid ſatisfaction. But particularly in reading, it may be depended upon as an approv-

ed truth, that the degree of profit as well as pleasure derived from it, will ever be proportioned to the degree of attention.

No. LXXXIII. ON THE PROPRIETY OF ADORNING LIFE, AND SERVING SOCIETY BY LAUDABLE EXERTION.

IN an age of opulence and luxury, when the native powers of the mind are weakened by vice, and habits of indolence are superinduced by universal indulgence, the moralist can seldom expect to see examples of that unwearied perseverance, of that generous exertion, which has sometimes appeared in the world, and has been called heroic virtue. Indeed, it must be allowed, that in the early periods of society there is greater occasion, as well as greater scope, for this exalted species of public spirit, than when all its real wants are supplied, and all its securities established.

Under these disadvantages there is, indeed, little opportunity for that uncommon heroism, which leads an individual to desert his sphere, and to act in contradiction to the maxims of personal interest and safety, with a view to reform the manners, or to promote the honour and advantage of the community. Patriotism, as it was understood and practised by a Brutus, a Curtius, a Scævola, or a Socrates, appears in modern times so eccentric a virtue, and so abhorrent form the dictates of common sense, that he who should imitate it would draw upon himself the ridicule of mankind, and would incur the danger of being stigmatized as a madman. Moral and political knight-errantry would now appear in scarcely a less ludicrous light than the extravagancies of chivalry.

But to do good in an effectual and extensive manner within the limits of professional influence, and by performing the business of a station, whatever it may be, not only with regular fidelity, but with warm and active diligence, is in the power, as it is the duty, of every individual who possesses the use of his faculties. It is surely an unsatisfactory idea, to live and die without pursuing any other pur-

poſe than the low one of perſonal gratification. A thouſand pleaſures and advantages we have received from the diſintereſted efforts of thoſe who have gone before us, and it is incumbent on every generation to do ſomething not only for the benefit of contemporaries, but of thoſe alſo who are to follow.

To be born, as Horace ſays, merely to conſume the fruits of the earth; to live, as Juvenal obſerves of ſome of his countrymen, with no other purpoſe than to gratify the palate, though they may in reality be the ſole ends of many, are yet too inglorious and diſgraceful to be avowed by the baſeſt and meaneſt of mankind.

There is however little doubt, but that many, whoſe lives have glided away in an uſeleſs tenor, would have been glad of opportunities, if they could have diſcovered them, for heroic exertion. It is certainly true, that to qualify for political, military, literary, and patriotic efforts, peculiar preparations, accompliſhments, occaſions, and fortuitous contingencies are neceſſary. Civil wiſdom without civil employment, valour without an enemy, learning without opportunities for its diſplay, the love of our country without power, muſt terminate in abortive wiſhes, in deſigns unſupported by execution. They who form great ſchemes, and perform great exploits, muſt of neceſſity be few. But the exertions which benevolence points out, are extended to a great compaſs, are infinitely varied in kind and degree, and conſequently adapted, in ſome mode or other, to the ability of every individual.

To the diſtinguiſhed honour of our times and of our country, it muſt be aſſerted, that there is no ſpecies of diſtreſs which is not relieved; no laudable inſtitution which is not encouraged with an emulative ardour of liberality. No ſooner is a proper object of beneficence preſented to the public view, than ſubſcriptions are raiſed by all ranks, who crowd with impatience to the contribution. Not only the infirmities of age and ſickneſs are ſoothed by the beſt concerted eſtabliſhments, and the loſs ſuſtained by the calamities of a conflagration repaired, but our enemies, when reduced to a ſtate of captivity, are furniſhed with every comfort which their condition can admit, and all the malig-

nity of party-hatred melts into kindneſs under the operation of charity. From the accumulated efforts of a community of philanthropiſts, ſuch as our nation may be called, a ſum of good is produced, far greater than any recorded of the heroes of antiquity, from Bacchus down to Cæſar.

It has been ſaid, that the ages of extraordinary bounty are paſſed. No colleges are founded in the preſent times, it is true; yet not becauſe there is no public ſpirit remaining, but becauſe there is already a ſufficient number raiſed by the pious hands of our forefathers, to anſwer all the purpoſes of academical improvement. When a want is ſupplied, it is not parſimony, but prudence, which withholds additional munificence. The infirmaries diffuſed over every part of the kingdom, are moſt honourable teſtimonies of that virtue which is to cover a multitude of ſins. And there is one inſtance of beneficence uncommon both in its degree and circumſtances, which, though done without a view to human praiſe, muſt not loſe even the ſubordinate reward of human virtue. He who lately devoted, during his life, a noble fortune to the relief of the blind, will be placed higher in the eſteem of poſterity, than the numerous train of poſthumous benefactors, who gave what they could no longer retain, and ſometimes from motives repreſented by the cenſorious as little laudable. While angels record the names of Hetherington, Howard, and Hanway, in the book of life, let men inſcribe them in the rolls of fame.

The motive of praiſe, though by no means the beſt, is a generous and a powerful motive of commendable conduct. He would do an injury to mankind who ſhould ſtifle the love of fame. It has burnt with ſtrong and ſteady heart in the boſoms of the moſt ingenuous. It has inſpired enthuſiaſm in the cauſe of all that is good and great. Where patience muſt have failed, and perſeverance been wearied, it has urged through troubles deemed intolerable, and ſtimulated through difficulties dreaded as unſurmountable. Pain, penury, danger, and death, have been incurred with alacrity in the ſervice of mankind, with the expectation of no other recompence than an honourable diſtinction. And let not the frigidity of philoſophical rigour damp this noble ardour, which raiſes delightful ſenſations in the heart

that harbours it, and gives rise to all that is sublime in life and in the arts. When we are so far refined and subdued as to act merely from the slow suggestions of the reasoning faculty, we shall indeed seldom be involved in error; but we shall as seldom atchieve any glorious enterprise, or snatch a virtue beyond the reach of prudence.

The spirit of adventure in literary undertakings, as well as in politics, commerce, and war, must not be discouraged. If it produces that which is worth little notice, neglect is easy. There is a great probability, however, that it will often exhibit something conducive to pleasure and improvement. But when every new attempt is checked by severity, or neglected without examination, learning stagnates, and the mind is depressed, till its productions so far degenerate as to justify disregard. Taste and literature are never long stationary. When they cease to advance, they become retrograde.

Every liberal attempt to give a liberal entertainment is entitled to a kind excuse, though its execution should not have a claim to praise. For the sake encouraging subsequent endeavours, lenity should be displayed where there is no appearance of incorrigible stupidity, of assuming ignorance, and of empty self-conceit. Severity chills the opening powers, as the frost nips the bud that would else have been a blossom. It is blameable moroseness to censure those who sincerely mean to please, and fail only from causes not in their own disposal.

The praise, however, of well meaning has usually been allowed with a facility of concession, which leads to suspect that it was thought of little value. It has also been received with apparent mortification. This surely is the result of a perverted judgment; for intention is in the power of every man, though no man can command ability.

No. LXXXIV. ON PHILOSOPHICAL CRITICISM, AND ON THE LITTLE ASSISTANCE IT GIVES TO GENIUS.

ARISTOTLE was the first of those writers who endeavoured to render taste subject to philosophy. His poetics are almost the only parts of his works which continue to be esteemed with a degree of implicit veneration. Mutilated and imperfect as they have come down to us, they yet contain many sentences pregnant with matter, and which lead the mind into the most curious theory. Yet it is certain, that they never yet formed a single poet, nor assisted him in any other respect than in the mechanical contrivance of a plan; a defect in which is easily forgiven, when it is supplied by the native charms of real genius. Of this our Shakespeare is a proof, who, with all his ignorance of critical refinement, wrote in such a manner, as not only to be preferred by those who idolize him through prejudice, but by the most impartial readers, to Æschylus Sophocles, and Euripides.

Though the old scholastic metaphysics were scarcely ever more exploded than in the present times, yet there is a taste for metaphysical criticism particularly prevalent among our thoughtful neighbours in North Britain. The author of the Elements of Criticism has penetrated deeply to discern the cause of those emotions, which literary compositions are found to produce. He has displayed great taste, great elegance great reading, and a subtilty of enquiry, which must have resulted from unwearied labour, and from a singular share of natural sagacity. But I believe no reader ever found himself better able to compose, after having perused his volumes, than before he saw them. Nor is it said, that their author, with all his theoretical knowledge of poetry, is himself a poet or an orator. This is not advanced to detract from his merit; for it is true of Aristotle, and of all those writers, who, with a genius for logic and metaphysics, have entered on the provinces of taste and criticism. Dr. Campbell's Philosophy of Rhetoric is a

book of uncommon merit; it is read with great pleasure and improvement; yet it will be readily owned, that it tends little to form the orator. The author of the Origin and Progress of Language has displayed, as Harris says, "many judicious and curious remarks on style, composition, language, particularly the English; observations of "the last consequence to those who wish either to write "or judge with accuracy and elegance." This is certainly true; and yet many have written, and many will write, with accuracy and elegance, without even hearing of this excellent treatise.

Most of the books which the world has agreed to admire, were composed previously to the appearance of systematical and abstruse theories of criticism, or by authors who, it is well known, paid them no attention. Homer, who is still the best heathen author in the world, had neither archetype nor instructor. Had his mind been called off from the book of nature, to such speculations as the Stagyrite afterwards fabricated from his noble inventions, there is great reason to believe, that the Iliad and Odyssey had long ago gone whither all the coldly correct productions are daily hastening. Theocritus would probably have written with much less ease and simplicity, had he read all that critical ingenuity has advanced on pastoral poetry. The Orations of Demosthenes, however elaborate, were not formed on the models of professed rhetoricians. No Bossu had written when Virgil produced his magnificent work. No treatises on the sublime and beautiful had appeared, when Milton poured his majestic song. Nature, glowing nature, suggested the exquisitely fine ideas as they flowed, and left laborious criticism to weary herself in forming rules and systems from the unstudied efforts of her happier temerity.

It must not, however, be immediately concluded, that these books, which display great ingenuity, are useless, and the result of ill employed time and talents. They constitute a most elegant species of philosophy. They lead to a knowledge of the human heart, and the operation of the passions. They require genius of a peculiar kind, the subtile and penetrating, and they please readers who are possessed of a corresponding taste. The point which I mean to evince is, that

the lover of poetry, of oratory, of all the objects of classical taste, who intends to exercise himself in the composition of them, will find himself mistaken in his plan of study, if he reads such writers as a preparatory discipline. Original authors must at first engross his attention; and from these, if he is possessed of abilities, he will insensibly catch a portion of fire, with which he will invigorate his own compositions; and in consequence of which he will be read with pleasure, though he should not have studied one metaphysical critic, from Aristotle to his modern rival, Harris of Salisbury.

To learn in what this noble distinction of genius consists, has been the subject of much enquiry. Little success has hitherto attended it; for the mind, as it has been often said, like the eye, though it calls up all nature to its view cannot procure a sight of itself. With great probability, it has been supposed, that genius is an extraordinary power of attention; a capacity in the mind of attaching itself closely and strongly at a glance, to every object that solicits its regard; of taking in the whole of it in all its distant relations, dependencies, modifications, origin and consequences. But if we allow an extraordinary power of attention to be genius, which perhaps cannot be allowed, the question recurs, by what means this attention is caused and secured? Thus far the name is only changed, and the subject still involved in its original difficulty.

It is too obviously true to be controvrted, that there is an essential difference in the organization of different men; not merely in the external form, but in the interior structure of the invisible springs, which regulate all the animal tendencies and motions. It is highly probable, that a delicate system of nerves, or a firmer contexture of them, is better able to observe the external world with unerring accuracy, than a more callous or a more relaxed assemblage of these instruments of sensation. This favourable predisposition of the organs, followed by peculiar opportunities for collecting ideas, and by inducements to impart them to the world, may perhaps constitute what we call literary genius.

There is indeed little doubt, but that some kind of geni-

us, or, in other words, some peculiar ability to receive a certain train of ideas necessary to the practice of some art, or to the pursuit of some profession, is possessed by eve y individual not in a state of idiotism. Nature, a kind parent to all her children, has usually endowed them all with a power of exerting themselves in some way or other, with skill and advantage. The misfortune has been, that the indications of nature are not always sufficiently manifest to the conductors of education. The destination is often necessarily fixed, before the faculties are arrived at sufficient strength to point out their propensity.

Universal genius is indeed sparingly, perhaps never, bestowed. For the preservation of impartiality, where nature has allowed an excellence in any remarkable degree, she has often permitted a defect to counterbalance it. Yet in the literary annals of almost every nation, we find many distinguished by intellectual endowments above the ordinary condition of humanity. It is a noble privilege to excel men in the very perfection by which they surpass the irrational animals, and is doubtless permitted by Providence, in a few individuals, for the happiness of human nature. Let it be considered, as an instance of the advantage which mankind derives from singular genius, what a train of light has been diffused far and wide on thousands and tens of thousands, for the space of near twenty hundred years, from the illumined understanding of the individual Cicero. Or, to take an example from our own polished age and country, let a conjecture be formed of the number of those who have been led to every thing good and great (KALOGATHIAN) by an Addison.

The world, however, has seldom been grateful to its benefactors. It has neglected, banished, poisoned, and crucified them. But there was an inward satisfaction in conscious rectitude, a generous spirit in heroic virtue, which bore them through every thing w'th comfort, and their me rit increased and triumphed in adversity.

They who have been possessed of subordinate degrees or genius, have in latter times been induced to affect a singularity of sentiment and practice, in order to draw upon themselves the eyes of mankind. In pursuit of this end, they

have adopted vices and principles which their hearts and understandings muſt have condemned. Eccentricity has been the object of their wiſhes. Ruin and diſgrace have been the uſual conſequences, and the admiration of others has at laſt been extinguiſhed in compaſſion. Poor man! it has been often exclaimed, he was indeed clever, but he wanted conduct, and he unfortunately died in a gaol!

If moral could be combined with mental excellence; if the native vigour of genius could ſubmit to be guided and reſtrained by the deciſions of well-conducted art; then might be ſupplied, what none will venture to expect, the two grand deſiderata in morals and literature, a perfect man and a perfect work. But before perfection can be reaſonably expected in any thing which belongs to man, this morta muſt put on immortality, and this corruptible, incorruption.

No. LXXXV. ON THE IMPORTANCE OF A GOOD CHARACTER, CONSIDERED ONLY WITH RESPECT TO INTEREST.

AS the minds of men are infinitely various, and as they are therefore influenced in the choice of a conduct by different inducements, the moraliſt muſt omit no motive, however ſubordinate in its nature, while it appears likely to lead ſome among mankind to a laudable, or even a blameleſs behaviour. A regard to eaſe, to intereſt, and to ſucceſs, in the uſual purſuits of wealth and ambition, may induce many to purſue an honeſt and honourable conduct, who would not have been influenced by purer motives; but who, after they have once perceived the intrinſic excellence and beauty of ſuch a conduct, will probably perſevere in it for its own ſake, and upon higher conſiderations.

To thoſe who are to make their own way either to wealth, or honours, a good character is uſually no leſs neceſſary than addreſs and abilities. Though human nature is degenerate, and corrupts itſelf ſtill more by its own inventions; yet it uſualy retains to the laſt an eſteem for excel-

lence. But even if we are arrived at such an extreme degree of depravity as to have lost our native reverence for virtue; yet a regard to our own interest and safety, which we seldom lose, will lead us to apply for aid, in all important transactions, to men whose integrity is unimpeached. When we chuse an assistant, a partner, a servant, our first inquiry is concerning his character. When we have occasion for a counsellor or attorney, a physician or apothecary, whatever we may be ourselves, we always chuse to trust our property and persons to men of the best character. When we fix on the tradesmen who are to supply us with necessaries, we are not determined by the sign of the lamb, or the wolf, or the fox; nor by a shop fitted up in the most elegant taste, but by the fairest reputation. Look into a daily newspaper, and you will see, from the highest to the lowest rank, how important the characters of the employed appear to the employers. After the advertisement has enumerated the qualities required in the person wanted, there constantly follows, that none need apply who cannot bring an undeniable character. Offer yourself as a candidate for a seat in parliament, be promoted to honour and emolument, or in any respect attract the attention of mankind upon yourself, and if you are vulnerable in your character, you will be deeply wounded. This is a general testimony in favour of honesty, which no writings and no practices can possibly refute.

Young men, therefore, whose characters are yet unfixed, and who, consequently, may render them just such as they wish, ought to pay great attention to the first steps which they take on entrance into life. They are usually careless and inattentive to this object. They pursue their own plans with ardour, and neglect the opinions which others entertain of them. By some thoughtless action or expression, they suffer a mark to be impressed upon them, which scarcely any subsequent merit can entirely erase. Every man will find some persons, who, though they are not professed enemies, yet view him with an envious or a jealous eye; and who will gladly revive any tale to which truth has given the slightest foundation.

Indeed, all men are so much inclined to flatter their own pride by detracting from the reputation of others, that even

if we were able to maintain an immaculate conduct, it would ſtill be difficult to preſerve an immaculate character. But yet it is wiſdom not to furniſh this detracting ſpirit with real ſubjects for the exerciſe of its activity. While calumny is ſupported only by imagination, or by malice, we may ſometimes remove, by contradicting it; but wherever folly or vice have ſupplied facts we can ſeldom do more than aggrivate the evil, by giving it an apparent attention. The malignity of ſome among the various diſpoſitions of which mankind are compoſed, is often highly gratified at the view of injuried ſenſibility.

In this turbulent and confuſed ſcene, where our words and actions are often miſunderſtood, and oftner miſrepreſented, it is indeed difficult even for innocence and integrity to avoid reproach, abuſe, contempt, and hatred. Theſe not only hurt our intereſt and impede our advancement in life, but ſorely afflict the feelings of a tender and delicate mind. It is then the part of wiſdom firſt to do every thing in our power to preſerve an irreproachable character, and then to let our happineſs depend chiefly on the approbation of our own conſciences, and on the advancement of our intereſt in a world where liars ſhall not be belived, and where ſlanderers ſhall receive countenance from none but him who, in Greek, is called, by way of eminence, Diabolus, or the Calumniator.

No. LXXXVI. ON THE OSTENTATIOUS AFFECTATION OF THE CHARACTER OF A LEARNED LADY WITHOUT SUFFICIENT LEARNING, AND WITHOUT JUDGMENT.

THE moſt attractive beauty of the perſon reſults from the graces of the mind. Delicacy, ſweetneſs, ſenſe and ſenſibility, ſhining in the eyes, will compenſate an irregularity of features, and will ſooner excite love in a feeling heart, than the beſt formed face, and the fineſt complexional hue without expreſſion.

Nature muſt indeed have laid the foundation of theſe amiable qualities in the diſpoſition; but they are by no methods

so effectually called forth and improved, as by the cultivation of a literary taste. In a vulgar intercourse with the world, we cannot avoid seeing and feeling the disagreeable passions, such as have an effect in distorting the countenance, and in giving to the eyes an envious, a proud, a disdainful, or an artful aspect; than which nothing is more repugnant to the power of personal allurement. Eyes that unfortunately have acquired any of these appearances, whatever beauties they may be surrounded with, possess a repellent influence, and operate like the basilisk. But however wicked the world is, books are for the most part still virtuous. Human nature appears in them in its most pleasing colours. They inspire generous and tender sentiments. She who is judiciously conversant with them, will find her countenance improving as her mind is informed, and her look ennobled as her heart is elevated. This must be a powerful motive for application among the ladies; and they may rest assured, that personal and mental beauty, though, when separate, their dominion is not absolute, are truly irresistible and despotic when combined.

An application to books, however, is often found not to produce any attractive effects; nor is it to be wondered at, when it is conducted in an injudicious and desultory manner. The advice of friends is at first necessary to point out the kind of books, andthe times, the modes, and the degrees of study. Superficial and ill-directed reading tends to inspire the most odious of all vanity, and to occasion a behaviour truly ridiculous.

Sempronia has studied all the Magazines for these ten years past, and has now and then obtained the honour of contributing a little piece to some of her admired miscellanies. This flattering distinction, as she thinks it has greatly elevated her in her own opinion. She deems it sufficient to emancipate her from the usual decorums of external behaviour. She talks with an overbearing confidence, which if she were not excused becaufe she is a professed wit, would be intolerable rudeness. Her attention to the muses has excluded the graces from any share of her notice. If you call upon her in the morning, you find her with slip-shod shoes, no apron, matted hair, a dirty face, a cap awry, and

fingers begrimed with ink. If you ask her in what she is exercising her genius, she informs you she is writing a Pindaric Ode on Spring, and is looking in Byshe's Art of Poetry for a rhyme to trees. It must be sent immediately, she says, or it will not be inserted this month. She hopes, therefore, that she may be excused in declining company. Her visitor has reason to rejoice at the dismission, for the sight of her, as Swift less delicately says of Cælia, will operate as an emetic, and the smell as a poison.

Corinna happened to fall upon some of the works of our modern sceptics. She could not understand them perfectly; but she discovered enough to be assured that scepticism was supposed to be a mark of superior sense, of a freedom from those narrow prejudices which enthral the vulgar. She cannot therefore talk on common affairs; but when she gets into company with enlightened people she expatiates on the happiness of possessing a philosophical turn, and pities the poor narrow souls who go to church and perform all their duties, as they call them, with mechanical regularity, just like their great grandmothers. Voltaire, Rousseau, Bolingbroke, and Hume, are her oracles. She is dreaded by her own sex, and indeed voluntarily gives up their society. But the men she thinks more entertaining, more conversible, and less shackled with prejudices. She imagines herself particularly attended to by them; and indeed there are some humourists who listen to her conversation, in order to lay up store for ridicule. All who are judges condemn and dislike her for entering into studies which have a natural tendency to darken the understanding and to corrupt the heart, and which are peculiarly odious in those who were formed to increase the comforts of life, and not to cut them off by diffusing the gloomy notions of the sceptic.

It was the misfortune of Fulvia to live next door to a circulating library. In every moment of listlessness the maid was dispatched for a handful of novels, no matter by whom they were written, or what they were in themselves, provided they were sentimental. By an uninterrupted course of such reading, she had acquired a taste for anecdotes, private history, and all that relates to the effects of love,

which, she was led to think, formed the great business of human life. Her heart had been a thousand times melted, and pierced, and smitten, and wounded, and was at last so mollified, that she felt the tenderest sentiments for every man with little distinction. She could not pass a few moments in a private interview with a male acquaintance, without being conscious of tender sentiments for him. She often doubted whether she ought, upon the whole, to rejoice or lament that she was endowed with such extreme sensibility. But to be sure, so it was, her poor heart was so full of love, that every one who approached might have a share unasked. Her voice was faint and tremulous; her refinements were elegant to a degree inconceivable. She was hardly fit for this low orb. She was always miserable, except when pouring out her sentiments in letters to some beloved Eudoxus. She was, in short, too tender, too susceptible, too pure, too elevated, to live in this world; and so every body said, till, in evil hour, she ran away with a corporal quartered in the town, and has never been heard of since.

Lesbia, when very young, wrote a few rhymes, which, as her age was considered, were much applauded by her friends. Flushed with praise, she considered herself as a second Sappho, and has ever since been devoted to the muses. Her reading was chiefly confined to the poet's corner in newspapers, and her productions have rivalled her models. She composes ænigms, acrostics, rebusses, and songs, for those little red pocket-books which are annually published for the ladies, and she has had the honour of gaining the reward for expounding the Prize Riddle. Within the circle of her acquaintance she is much admired. If a wedding happens among any of them, she pays for her bride-cake with an epithalamium; and she keeps in her drawers, like haberdashers wares in a shop, odes, elegies and epigrams, adapted to every occasion. But, while she is soaring on the wings of poetical genius in her study, her poor little boys and girls are left to the company of the scullion in the kitchen. Her mind is extremely active, and it is but justice to allow that she neglects nothing but her duty.

Of all subjects, politics seem the least adapted to the female character. Women are excluded, by the rude framers

of our conſtitution, from all legiſlative influence; and it is well known, that public affairs are ſeldom treated with temper, either in writing or converſation. But the female politician is by no means uncommon. Cornelia derives all her learning, of which ſhe thinks ſhe poſſeſſes an ample ſhare from the miſcellaneous volumes of a Woodfall. She has herſelf ſometimes ventured to communicate a paragraph or two, and has been delighted, even to rapture, with the thought, that a plan or conjecture of hers has been wafted throughout the empire by ſo rapid a conveyance. On common ſubjects ſhe is mild and reaſonable; but while the gentlemen are talking politics, ſhe ſubmits with great reluctance to the frigid rules of decorum, which require that ſhe ſhould pay attention to the ladies. Her colour comes and goes for a long time, till at laſt ſhe can bear it no longer, and burſts out with a blaze of eloquence, ſcarcely rivalled in the moſt famous ſchools of oratory, thoſe of Athens and Billingſgate. A treaty of marriage was on foot ſome time ago; but after the preliminaries were all ſettled, and a day for the ratification of the articles fixed, a rupture enſued on the adjuſtment of the balance of power, and hoſtilities have not yet ceaſed, nor is a coalition of the parties likely to take place.

In theſe few inſtances, and in thoſe many which obſervation of the world will ſupply, there ſeems to have been an original fund of parts, and a love of books, which, properly directed, would have led to great improvements. But vague induſtry and unguided emulation, ſtimulated to perſiſt in a wrong path by the partial praiſes of friends and relations, have precipitated even the amiably diſpoſed into unſupported vanity, and cauſed them to diſtinguiſh themſelves without acquiring honour.

To be affected in any way is, at all times, in all places, and in all degrees, to be diſagreeable. But affectation of learning and authorſhip, in a woman with very little merit, draws upon itſelf the contempt and hatred of both ſexes. They who excel moſt in either ſex, are found by experience to be moſt candid and modeſt, to aſſume leaſt, and to join in converſation with others, without diſplaying the ſenſe of their ſuperiority. Indeed it often happens, that there is an

amiable humility in true genius and learning, which compels the poſſeſſor of them to think diffidently of his own character, amid the united praiſes of all around. Let her then, who poſſeſſes the bright jewels of genius and learning, take care to ſet them in a plain manner, and their luſtre will diſplay additional brilliancy.

In the embelliſhment of the perſon, a ſufficient degree of care is uſually taken that nothing unbecoming ſhall have a place in it. A regard is commonly paid to age, rank, and every circumſtance which can point out the line of propriety. But in adorning the mind it is uſual to attend to little elſe but the dictates of Inclination. Yet there is certainly a kind of ſexual difference in the minds of the ſexes, which admits and requires a different ſpecies of intellectual accompliſhment. Oeconomy is ſaid, indeed, to be the peculiar province of women; yet ſurely, as rational beings, their reaſon may properly receive the higheſt poſſible cultivation. Nor ſhould their attainments occaſion contempt or neglect, unleſs they are ſullied by obtruding arrogance, by a maſculine boldneſs, a critical ſeverity, and an ill-timed and injudicious oſtentation.

No. LXXXVII. ON THE FOLLY AND WICKEDNESS OF NEGLECTING A FAMILY AND CHILDREN, FOR THE PLEASURES OF DISSIPATION.

THOUGH it may be true, as it has been aſſerted, that one age is not better than another, yet it is obvious to remark that the modes, if not the degrees, of vice, have varied at different periods; and that, of modes equally criminal in themſelves, ſome are particularly deſtructive. Whatever have been the manners of preceding times in our country, I believe it will be readily allowed, that the middle ranks were never univerſally affected with the love of a diſſipating life till the preſent age. Domeſtic induſtry and œconomy, or the qualities diſtinguiſhed by the homely titles of thriftineſs and good houſewifery, were always, to the preſent century, deemed honourable. They are now, however,

discarded in disgrace; and in their place have succeeded a passionate love of show without substance, a never-ceasing attention to dress, and an insatiable hunger and thirst after diversions public and private.

Whoever considers the natural effect of excessive indulgence, in relaxing and weakening the tone of the mind, will immediately perceive how pernicious it must be to human nature in general, and to each particular society. There can remain neither inclination nor ability for exertion, when the strings which should give elasticity are all loose or broken; and without exertion what is man? Behold what he is in the womanish court of an oriental tyrant. Sunk in sloth, and prostrate in meanness, poor human nature, in such a situation, scarcely equals, in spirit or ingenuity, the monkey and baboon.

But I mean not to enlarge on dissipation in general, but to consider its effects in the limited circle of private families; from which, however, it gradually extends its influence over the whole community, throughout all its departments, like the undulations of a pebble thrown into a pool.

Let us suppose a married couple in the middle ranks of life; (and I select my instances from the middle ranks because they are the most numerous and important)—let us suppose them just setting out, as it is called in the world. The first object is to form and extend connections. The ostensible motive is the advancement of the family interest; the real and most powerful motive, the love of various company, in a continual succession. Dinners and suppers, dancing and card-playing, leave little time, and no inclination, for the sober business of the trade or profession. A neglected trade or profession cannot succeed; and the poor young people, after having spent the little and hard-earned patrimony which, it may be, their affectionate parents bestowed on them, live the rest of their lives in some poor lodging in penury or servitude, or die of disappointment.

But if, by uncommonly good fortune, they avoid bankruptcy or ruin, yet their love of dissipation never fails to poison that happiness which it pretends to sweeten. It prevents them from performing the most indispensable du-

ties, and living the life of rational creatures. All heads of families are presidents of little societies, which they are bound to regulate by precept and example. But how shall they be qualified to do this, who are seldom at home, and who, when they are there, are constantly engaged in vanity. Their own corruption descends, with additional malignity of influence, to the lowest menial servant, who has sought protection beneath their roof.

But let us consider them in the relation of parents. Nothing can be more inconsistent with the life of a lady, who delights in the fashionable amusements, than the care of her new-born child. Her dress would be disconcerted, and her shape spoiled, where she to attempt to feed it herself with the food which nature has made convenient for it. She could not be absent from home. She must be liable to interruption at all hours. Her health also must fail under so constant a fatigue, added to the necessary toils of the ball and card-table. Her physician, for she takes care to keep the doctor on her side, declares, that from the delicate imbecility of her constitution, it would be highly improper for her to submit to the exhausting task of suckling an infant. The little one, therefore, whose heavenly smiles would repay every maternal care, is sent to the cottage, or the garret, of some hireling nurse. There, amidst poverty, hunger, and nastiness, it drags a precarious existence with no attention, but the cold charity of a mercenary woman, who has often, at the same time, a child of her own to engross her maternal endearments. The mother, in the mean time, is engaged in the gay circle of an assembly, losing that money at cards, or spending it in dress and pleasures, which ought to pay her husband's creditors. Ah! little thinks she how her poor infant, which ought to be fostered in her bosom, is bewailing, in the expressive language of tears, the neglect, and the harsh treatment it undergoes, in the dreary haunts of want and misery. Many a severe menace, and many a hard blow does the sweet babe receive from the passionate and ignorant nurse, at which a mother's heart would bleed if it were not lost to sensibility. Poor innocents, unhappy orphans, deserted in your helpless state, by those who have brought you into a wretched world; may He who

took the children up in his arms, put his hands on them, and bleſſed them, have pity on your woes, on thoſe injuries which ye ſorely ſuffer, but cannot have deſerved!

Life, however, is not eaſily extinguiſhed; and notwithſtanding all the pains and inconveniencies which the child unde goes from want of food, from want of cleanlineſs, from want of thoſe tender attentions which a mother only can pay, it does indeed ſurvive; but what remains of its lot is even more miſerable than that which has already paſſed. As it has always been abſent from home, it is a ſtranger there. Its parents feel but little natural affection for it; for natural affection fixes itſelf in the heart moſt deeply at that period when the infant is hanging at the breaſt, and ſmiling, as it were, with gratitude in the face of her who ſupplies it with delicious nouriſhment from her own vital current.

It takes ſtill firmer poſſeſſion of the heart when the child begins to prattle, and to play thoſe little tricks, which none but a callous mind can behold without delight. But alas! the little boy or girl are ſtill conſidered as obſtacles to pleaſure at home. They pay a ſhort and formal viſit there, and are again diſmiſſed to a nurſe, locked up with ſervants in the garret, or transferred to their grandmother. The laſt is a moſt enviable lot in compariſon with the former; in which they not only experience harſh words and hard blows, but learn vulgar ideas, vulgar language, and habits of every every kind which muſt one day be unlearned.

As ſoon as they can walk firmly, and talk plainly, they are removed to one of thoſe convenient ſchools or academies, as they are called, where children, at a very early age, are received as into nurſeries. In the ſubſequent courſe of their education they are conſtantly kept from home; or if they are indulged in a viſit of a few days, they ſee little but what tends to miſlead them. They receive no fatherly advice, and whatever learning they may acquire at their ſchools, they uſually enter on the ſtage to act their part in the drama of life, without judgment and without principles to regulate their conduct. There is uſually added to their misfortune of being neglected and miſled, that of being deprived of all ſhare of their parents poſſeſſions; who, in the gay circles of pleaſure, not only ſpend their own property,

but involve themſelves and their paternal eſtates in debt, and in every ſpecies of diſtreſſing and diſgraceful embarraſſment. There is no part of the family and affairs of the diſſipated which has not a tendency to ruin. They are themſelves in a conſtant ſtate of mortification and diſappointment. Their object in purſuing a perpetual round of amuſements, is to obtain perpetual pleaſure; an object which human nature could never yet accompliſh. They, of all others, are leaſt likely to obtain it, who make pleaſure a buſineſs, and, in proſecution of it, neglect their moſt important and their daily duties. Indeed, there is nothing more miſapprehended than the nature of pleaſure. Men are deluded by a name, and, catching at a phantom, loſe the reality. The trueſt pleaſure reſults from calm and moderate emotions. Noiſe, tumult, violence, diſorder, take off the fine ſpirit from that which is otherwiſe formed to pleaſe, and leave little behind but dregs or diſagreeable ingredients. Balls, aſſemblies, feaſts, public diverſions, cards, dreſs, various company, ſhould be purſed only as, what they are, temporary amuſements. Aſk thoſe who are whirled in the vortex of faſhion, whether they are happy? Notwithſtanding they are engaged, without ceaſing, in what the world calls pleaſure, they are as ready to complain of languor and of miſery as any other part of mankind. Pride and vanity compel them to move with others of their rank or fortune; but their countenances and words abundantly teſtify that they have, at leaſt, their ſhare of human uneaſineſs. They feel, indeed, the ſatisfaction of being diſtinguiſhed from the poor, becauſe their fortunes enable them to pay for the diſtinction; but that happineſs is but ſlenderly ſupported, which is founded only on the gratification of a weak and a womaniſh vanity.

With reſpect to that particular part of the evil reſulting from diſſipation, the neglect and conſequent miſery of families, it is certainly very extenſive and important. Single men, and ſingle women, however led aſtray by the falſe lights of their own vain imagination, ſuffer by themſelves, or at leaſt draw but a few in their train. But the whole riſing generation muſt be endangered, when diſſipation is become univerſal among parents and the heads of families.

Selfish arguments may succeed when others fail; and I therefore wish I could convince the generality of a certain truth; that there is really more pleasure to be found at the family fire-side, and in the regular performance of domestic duties, than in the never-ceasing pursuit after fashionable amusements. What is the delight of seeing an Italian or French dancer stand upon one leg, compared to that of beholding one's own smiling babes in the raptures of a game at play? What is the delight of glittering at a ball, a play, a masquerade, compared to that of a home, in which are found plenty, tranquillity, and love, uninterrupted by the extravagance, the folly, the pride, and the restlessness of that ignorant, empty, weak, and fickle, yet arbitrary tyrant, fashion?

Not that the moralist is severe. He prohibits no moderate and reasonable enjoyments. He is too well acquainted with human nature, and with life, so to moralize. He maintains only, that though dissipating pleasures may be allowed as a temporary relief, they are fatal to happiness and virtue, when they are suffered to engage the whole attention, or to become the chief employment.

No. LXXXVIII. ON FORMING CONNECTIONS.

ONE can never sufficiently admire the liberal spirit of the great philosopher and orator of Rome, who, in his fine treatise on friendship, has exploded the idea, that the prospect of advantage is the foundation of this virtuous union, and asserted, that it owes its origin to a conviction of mutual excellence in morals and disposition.

This generous opinion appears still greater and more amiable when it is contrasted with the precepts and the practices of later ages, and particularly of the present. It is now one of the first admonitions given to a young man, who is entering on the career of life, that he must at all events make connections. And instead of informing him, that he is to be directed in his choice of them by the appearance of moral and mental excellence, according to the sublime ideas of the noble Roman, his sagacious monitors

ſuggeſt to him, that he is to be ſolely guided by the proſpect of his intereſt and advancement in the road of ambition. Let a poor man of approved character, learning, and genius, and a rich man of faſhion, with no pretenſions to either, be introduced to a ſenſible and prudent young man of the world who has been thus inſtructed; and while the rich man is viewed with ſubmiſſion, complacence, and treated with almoſt idolatrous attention, the poor man ſtands by unnoticed, and probably deſpiſed. On the ſlight acquaintance of a firſt introduction, the youth who is deeply verſed in worldly wiſdom, will not fail to call at the rich man's houſe, and leave a card with moſt reſpectful compliments; he would not come into the neighbourhood without paying that reſpect, on any account whatever; he is not half ſo ſcrupulous about going to church, and paying his court to his Maker; but at the very time while he is bowing at the threſhold of the rich man, the philoſopher ſhall paſs by, and becauſe he poſſeſſes only a competency without ſuperfluity, and without influence, he ſhall not be honoured with the common civility of a ſalutation. For it is a maxim with theſe men, that as it is an honour to know and be known to perſons of fortune and title, ſo it is a diſgrace to acknowledge an acquaintance with thoſe who have nothing to recommend them but honour, ſpirit, learning, and virtue.

The formation of connections is conſidered as ſo important, that it becomes, in effect, the principal object in education. The boy, whoſe parents are profeſſed people of the world, would not, on any account, fail to place him at a ſchool to which the ſons of the nobility are often ſent, tho' they are ready to confeſs, that little learning and great profligacy are the uſual acquiſitions in it. If the boy has grown intimate with the ſon of a Duke, a Lord, or a Baronet, his parents are better pleaſed with him, than if he had learned by heart all Horace, Virgil, and Homer. There is no ſubmiſſion ſo mean, and no attention ſo ſervile, but he is ready to pay them with alacrity, in accompliſhing the important object of forming connections. The mind is rendered, by theſe means, low and abject; and though the boy may afterwards riſe to the honour of being a nobleman's chaplain, or his travelling companion, yet he will retain, through life,

the ſentiments and ſpirit of his Lordſhip's footman or valet-de-chambre.

A man, unacquainted with the world, might ſuppoſe, that the readieſt road to preferment, in ſeveral of the profeſſions, is to acquire the knowledge and accompliſhments which are neceſſary to a ſkilful practice of them. But this is really not the caſe. The ſureſt and moſt compendious method pointed out by the wiſe men of this world is to form connections. Accordingly we obſerve many perſons in the profeſſions, who aim at diſtinction and advancement, by no means confining themſelves to their libraries; but ſtudying the graces of dreſs and addreſs, and the arts of ſimulation and diſſimulation. We ſee them frequenting all public places, giving and receiving invitations to dinners and ſuppers, and evidently ſpending ſo much time in diſſipation, as to leave ſcarcely an hour in a day for reading and ſtudy.

We will ſuppoſe a young man entering on the profeſſion of a phyſician. The time before he is of age is, perhaps, devoted to hearing faſhionable lectures, and to reading a few ſuperficial books; ſuch as tend to acquaint him with the common and obvious modes of practice. But he no ſooner ſteps into the world than both books and lectures are laid aſide. Several years, indeed, muſt elapſe before he takes his doctor's degree. But this time is not ſpent in ſtudy only, by him who knows how to play his cards, as it is called, and to ſecure ſucceſs in life. No; he has learned a wiſer leſſon, and is well aſſured, that the moſt familar acquaintance with Galen and Hippocrates will not advance him half ſo well as connections. Connections are therefore the firſt and the laſt ſtudy of the day. If he has been fortunate enough to procure an introduction to a few titled perſons, and to preſcribe with ſucceſs in the caſe of ſome Ducheſs Dowager's pricked finger, his fortune is made; he cannot fail of being recommended to more connections in the ſame faſhionable line. He himſelf will become the faſhion, and people of faſhion will wiſh to be ill, or pretend to be ill, that they may have the credit of calling doctor ſuch an one "our phyſician." Connections will now be made, and money accumulated with ſuch rapidity, that the doctor will become a greater man than his employers, and venture,

to dictate to Lords and Dukes on politics, as well as on a purge.

In the subordinate branches also of the healing art, and indeed in most of the walks of life, much more dependence is placed on connections than on merit; much more attention paid to acquiring connections than to acquiring merit; and to deserve connections is by no means thought the surest method of obtaining them. Deceit, external show, and pompous pretences, are deemed infallible nostrums for making connections; but, alas! can any lucrative advantage resulting from connections, repay a rational creature for sacrificing truth and liberty? These connections are dignified by the name of friendships. Shade of Cicero, what indignation must thou feel at such presumption!

In divinity too, I am sorry to observe, that many more have risen to ecclesiastical emolument and dignity by studying, throughout their lives, to make connections, than by superior piety or by theological attainments. It is lamentable to behold those whose minds ought to possess peculiar elevation, bowing and cringing, with abject servility, to the vilest peer of the realm, who happens to have influence at court, or to be the patron of a living. The lord shall be a professed scoffer at all religion, and an avowed enemy to christianity in particular, and yet shall have a tribe of clergymen at his levee, who cannot help admiring his wit and understanding. Preferment, indeed, seems to be the only object among many of those, who are set apart to teach the world that the riches of divine grace are the truest riches, and the distinction of superior virtue the most enviable dignity. Horace has said, that to have pleased the great is not the lowest praise; many of the modern instructors of mankind seem to consider it as the highest; and, in proportion as they are servile to their patron, they are insolent to their curate.

It is a maxim with many, founded, as they pretend, on real observation, that mitres, stalls, and pluralities, are not attainable by any such qualities as are acquired in the study. You must form connections. In order to form connections, you must recommend yourself to various company by the graces; you must possess versatility of mind; you must fre-

quent assemblies, gaming-tables, watering-places: your conscience must be as easy as your manners; you must take care not to spend too much time in reading Greek, or any thing else but the Court Calendar; and you can hardly fail of valuable connections and valuable preferment, as thousands can testify by actual experience.

But though numbers may give confidence, surely those whose whole employment consists in meanly hunting for preferment under the garb of sanctity and religion, are most contemtible characters. Indeed, their dispositions are usually as narrow, sefish, and slavish, as their pursuits are sordid, and unbecoming the dignity of a sacred profession. Arise, Cicero, for my ideas return with pleasure to thee; arise, and behold a pompous preacher, in a large peruke and solemn canonicals, cringing to a debauched, unbelieving, and bishop-making Lord, and pretending all the while that he is cultivating friendship in all its purity!

But would you forbid a young man the formation of connections, by which so many have availed themselves, and risen to real and deserved grandeur? By no means; I would only teach him to preserve a just reverence for himself, and to despise all riches and all honours which must be purchased at the expence of truth, virtue, and a manly spirit. I would, like others, advise every young man (and it is chiefly to the young that I presume to suggest admonitions) to form connections, or rather friendships; but to be guided in his choice of them by personal merit and approved character. I do not say, for it would be unnatural and unwise, that he should neglect interest, or despise advancement, when it can be procured consistently with the spirit and integrity of an honest and delicate mind. If preferment comes unlooked for, and unsought by servile compliance, it is an honour as well as an advantage, and is doubly welcome. But if I must sacrifice my reason and my conscience, my honour and my freedom, in forming connections and pursuing preferment, I relinquish the chace and eagerly retire to competency, contentment and liberty.

No. LXXXIX. AN ADDRESS TO A YOUNG SCHOLAR, SUPPOSED TO BE IN THE COURSE OF A LIBERAL EDUCATION AT SCHOOL.

YOUR parents have watched over your helpleſs infancy, and conducted you, with many a pang, to an age at which your mind is capable of manly improvement. Their ſolicitude ſtill continues, and no trouble nor expence is ſpared in giving you all the inſtructions and accompliſhments which may enable you to act your part in life, as a man of poliſhed ſenſe and confirmed virtue. You have, then, already contracted a great debt of gratitude to them. You can pay it by no other method but by uſing the advantages which their goodneſs has afforded you.

If your endeavours are deficient, it is in vain that you have tutors, books and all the external apparatus of literary purſuits. You muſt love learning, if you intend to poſſeſs it. In order to love it you muſt feel its delights; in order to feel its delights, you muſt apply to it, however irkſome at firſt, cloſely, conſtantly, and for a conſiderable time. If you have reſolution enough to do this, you cannot but love learning; for the mind always loves that to which it has been long, ſteadily, and voluntarily attached. Habits are formed, which render what was at firſt diſagreeable, not only pleaſant, but neceſſary.

Pleaſant, indeed, are all the paths which lead to polite and elegant literature. Yours, then, is ſurely a lot particularly happy. Your education is of ſuch a ſort, that its principal ſcope is to prepare you to receive a refined pleaſure during your life. Elegance, or delicacy of taſte, is one of the firſt objects of a claſſical diſcipline; and it is this fine quality which opens a new world to the ſcholar's view. Elegance of taſte has a connection with many virtues, and all of them virtues of the moſt amiable kind. It tends to render you at once good and agreeable. You muſt therefore be an enemy to your own enjoyments, if you enter on the diſcipline which leads to the attainment of a claſſical and

liberal education with reluctance. Value duly the opportunities you enjoy, and which are denied to thousands of your fellow-creatures.

Without exemplary diligence you will make but a contemptible proficiency. You may indeed pass through the forms of schools and universities, but you will bring nothing away from them of real value. The proper sort and degree of diligence you cannot possess, but by the efforts of your own resolution. Your instructor may, indeed, confine you within the wall of a school, a certain number of hours. He may place books before you, and compel you to fix your eyes upon them; but no authority can chain down your mind. Your thoughts will escape from every external restraint, and, amidst the most serious lectures, may be ranging in the wild pursuit of trifles or vice. Rules, restraints, commands, and punishments may, indeed, assist in strengthening your resolution; but, without your own voluntary choice, your diligence will not often conduce to your pleasure or advantage. Though this truth is obvious, yet it seems to be a secret to those parents who expect to find their son's improvement increase in proportion to the number of tutors and external assistances, which their opulence has enabled them to provide. These assistances, indeed, are sometimes afforded, chiefly that the young heir to a title or estate may indulge himself in idleness and nominal pleasures. The lesson is construed to him, and the exercise written for him by the private tutor, while the hapless youth is engaged in some ruinous pleasure, which at the same time prevents him from learning any thing desirable, and leads to the formation of destructive habits, which can seldom be removed.

But the principal obstacle to improvement at your school, especially if you are too plentifully supplied with money, is a perverse ambition of being distinguished as a boy of spirit in mischievous pranks, in neglecting the tasks and lessons, and for every vice and irregularity which the puerile age can admit. You will have sense enough, I hope, to discover, beneath the mask of gaiety and good-nature, that malignant spirit of detraction, which endeavours to render the boy who applies to books, and to all the duties and proper business

of the school, ridiculous. You will see, by the light of your reason that the ridicule is misapplied. You will discover, that the boys who have recourse to ridicule, are, for the most part, stupid, unfeeling, ignorant, and vicious. Their noisy folly, their bold confidence, their contempt of learning, and their defiance of authority, are, for the most part, the genuine effects of hardened insensibility. Let not their insults and ill treatment dispirit you. If you yield to them with a tame and abject submission, they will not fail to triumph over you with additional insolence. Display a fortitude in your pursuits, equal in degree to the obstinacy in which they persist in theirs. Your fortitude will soon overcome theirs; which is seldom any thing more than the audacity of a bully. Indeed, you cannot go through a school with ease to yourself, and with success, without a considerable share of courage. I do not mean that sort of courage which leads to battles and contentions, but which enables you to have a will of your own, and to pursue what is right, amidst all the persecutions of surrounding enviers, dunces, and detractors. Ridicule is the weapon made use of at schools, as well as in the world, when the fortresses of virtue are to be assailed. You will effectually repel the attack by a dauntless spirit and unyielding perseverance. Though numbers are against you, yet, with truth and rectitude on your side, you may be IPSE AGMEN, though alone, yet equal to an army.

By laying in a store of useful knowledge, adorning your mind with elegant literature, improving and establishing your conduct by virtuous principles, you cannot fail of being a comfort to those friends who have supported you, of being happy within yourself, and of being well received by mankind. Honour and success in life will probably attend you. Under all circumstances you will have an internal source of consolation and entertainment, of which no sublunary vicissitude can deprive you. Time shews how much wiser is your choice than that of your idle companions, who would gladly have drawn you into their association, or rather into their conspiracy, as it has been called, against good manners, and against all that is honourable and useful. While you appear in society as a respectable and valuable member of it, they have sacrificed, at the shrine of vanity,

pride, extravagance, and falſe pleaſure, their health and their ſenſe, their fortunes and their characters.

No. XC. THE WANT OF PIETY ARISES FROM THE WANT OF SENSIBILITY.

IT appears to me, that the mind of man, when it is free from natural defects and and acquired corruption, feels no leſs a tendency to the indulgence of devotion, than to virtuous love, or to any other of the more refined and elevated affections. But debauchery and exceſs contribute greatly to deſtroy all the ſuſceptible delicacy with which nature uſually furniſhes the heart; and, in the general extinction of our better qualities, it is no wonder that ſo pure a ſentiment as that of piety, ſhould be one of the firſt to expire.

It is certain that the underſtanding may be improved in a knowledge of the world, and in the arts of ſucceeding in it, while the heart, or whatever conſtitutes the ſeat of the moral and ſentimental feelings, is gradually receding from its proper and original perfection. Indeed, experience ſeems to evince, that it is hardly poſſible to arrive at the character of a complete man of the world, without loſing many of the moſt valuable ſentiments of uncorrupted nature. A complete man of the world is an artificial being; he has diſcarded many of the native and laudable tendencies of his mind, and adopted a new ſyſtem of objects and propenſities of his own creation. Theſe are commonly groſs, coarſe, ſordid, ſelfiſh, and ſenſual. All, or either of theſe attributes, tend directly to blunt the ſenſe of every thing liberal, enlarged, diſintereſted; of every thing which participates more of an intellectual than of a ſenſual nature. When the heart is tied down to the earth by luſt and avarice, it is not extraordinary that the eye ſhould be ſeldom lifted up to heaven. To the man who ſpends his Sunday (becauſe he thinks the day fit for little elſe) in the counting-houſe, in travelling, in the tavern, or in the brothel, thoſe who go to church appear as fools, and the buſineſs they go upon

as nonsense. He is callous to the feelings of devotion; but he is tremblingly alive to all that gratifies his senses or promotes his interest.

It has been remarked of those writers who have attacked christianity, and represented all religions merely as diversified modes of superstition, that they were indeed, for the most part, men of a metaphysical and a disputatious turn of mind, but usually little distinguished for benignity and generosity. There was, amidst all their pretensions to logical sagacity, a cloudiness of ideas, and a coldness of heart, which rendered them very unfit judges on a question in which the heart is chiefly interested; in which the language of nature is more expressive and convincing, than all the dreary subtleties of the dismal metaphysicians. Even the reasoning faculty, on which we so greatly value ourselves, may be perverted by excessive refinement; and there is an abstruse, but vain and foolish philosophy, which philosophizes us out of the noblest parts of our noble nature. One of those parts of us is our instinctive sense of religion, of which not one of those brutes which the philosophers most admire, and to whose rank they wish to reduce us, is found in the slightest degree to participate.

Such philosophers may be called, in a double sense, the enemies of mankind. They not only endeavour to entice man from his duty, but to rob him of a most exalted and natural pleasure. Such, surely, is the pleasure of devotion. For when the soul rises above this little orb, and pours its adoration at the throne of celestial Majesty, the holy fervour which it feels is itself a rapturous delight. Neither is this a declamatory representation, but a truth felt and acknowledged by all the sons of men; except those who have been defective in sensibility, or who hoped to gratify the pride or the malignity of their hearts, by singular and pernicious speculation.

Indeed, all disputations, controversial and metaphysical writings on the subject of religion, are unfavourable to genuine piety. We do not find, that the most renowned polemics in the church militant, were at all more attentive than others to the common offices of religion, or that they were actuated by any peculiar degree of devotion. The truth

is, their religion centered in their heads, whereas its natural region is the heart. The heart! confined, alas! in colleges or libraries, unacquainted with all the tender charities of husband, father, brother, friend; some of them have almost forgotten that they possess a heart. It has long ceased to beat with the pulsations of love and sympathy, and has been engrossed by pride on conquering an adversary in the syllogistic combat, or by impotent anger on a defeat. With such habits, and so destructive a system of feelings, can we expect that a Doctor of the Sorbonne, or the disputing professor of divinity, should ever feel the pure flame of piety that glowed in the bosoms of Mrs. Rowe, Mrs. Talbot, or Mr. Nelson?

An inexperienced and unobservant man might expect to find extraordinary devotion and piety in the chapels and colleges of our English universities. Many of our academics are summoned to prayers, not less often than four times every day throughout the year. But do they attend voluntarily, or in obedience to a statute? Is there any particular piety or decency in the performance of public worship? Quite the reverse; for in no place of worship are the prayers read in a more careless or perfunctory manner; in none are more indecencies practised and connived at, than in the chapels of our English universities. The reason is, that those who attend in them consist, for the most part, either of jolly fellows, who drown all thoughts, in wine, and its concomitants; or of dry logicians and metaphysicians, who, in the towering heights of their wisdom, are superior to the weaknesses of a devotee. I have seen in many a country church, where the congregation consisted only of honest husbandmen and their families, more decency and more devotion, than in any chapel in the venerable seats of learning and religion. A very amiable and ingenious writer has ventured to suggest, that even the clergy at large, from the habit of talking and disputing with familiarity on subjects of religion, are less apt to indulge the ardour of devotion, than the common tribe of mankind, engaged in the varied and busy scene of many-coloured life.

It is however certain, that a devotional taste and habit are very desirable in themselves, exclusive of their effects in

meliorating the morals and disposition, and promoting present and future felicity. They add dignity, pleasure, and security to any age: but to old age they are the most becoming grace, the most substantial support, and the sweetest comfort. In order to preserve them, it will be necessary to preserve our sensibility: and nothing will contribute so much to this purpose as a life of temperance, innocence, and simplicity.

No. XCI. ON THE PLEASURES OF A GARDEN.

NOT he alone is to be esteemed a benefactor to mankind who makes an useful discovery; but he also who can point out and recommend an innocent pleasure. Of this kind are the pleasures arising from the observation of nature, and they are highly agreeable to every taste uncorrupted by vicious indulgence.

There will always be many in a rich and civilized country, who, as they are born to the enjoyment of competent estates, engage not in business either civil or professional. But the restless mind must either find or make an object. Pleasure, therefore, becomes, to the unemployed, a serious pursuit. Whatever is its essence, and whatever the declaimer may urge against it, pleasure will be sought by all who possess the liberty of election. It becomes then incumbent on the moralist, not only to urge the performance of duty, but to exhibit objects that please without enervating the mind, and gratify desire without corrupting the principles.

Rural scenes, of almost every kind, are delightful to the mind of man. The verdant plain, the flowery mead, the meandering stream, the playful lamb, the warbling of birds, are all capable of exciting emotions gently agreeable. But the misfortune is, that the greater part are hurried on in the career of life with too great rapidity to be able to give attention to that which solicits no passion. The darkest habitation in the dirtiest street of the metropolis, where money can be earned, has greater charms, with many, than the groves of Hagley.

Yet the patron of refined pleaſure, the elegant Epicurus, fixed the ſeat of his enjoyment in a garden. He was of opinion, that a tranquil ſpot, furniſhed with the united ſweets of art and nature, was the beſt adapted to delicate repoſe. And even the ſeverer philoſophers of antiquity were wont to diſcourſe in the ſhade of a ſpreading tree, in ſome cultivated plantation.

It is obvious, on intuition, that nature often intended ſolely to pleaſe the eye in her vegetable productions. She decorates the flowret that ſprings beneath our feet, in all the perfection of external beauty. She has clothed the garden with a conſtant ſucceſſion of various hues. Even the leaves of the tree undergo a pleaſing viciſſitude. The freſh verdure which they exhibit in the ſpring, the various ſhades which they aſſume in ſummer, the yellow and ruſſet tinge of autumn, and the nakedneſs of winter, afford a conſtant pleaſure to a lively imagination. From the ſnow-drop to the moſs-roſe, the flower-garden diſplays an infinite variety of ſhape and colour. The taſte of the floriſt has been ridiculed as trifling; yet ſurely without reaſon. Did nature bring forth the tulip and the lily, the roſe and the honeyſuckle, to be neglected by the haughty pretender to ſuperior reaſon? To omit a ſingle ſocial duty for the cultivation of a polyanthus, were ridiculous as well as criminal; but to paſs by the beauties laviſhed before us, without obſerving them, is no leſs ingratitude than ſtupidity. A bad heart finds little amuſement but in a communication with the active world, where ſcope is given for the indulgence of malignant paſſions; but an amiable diſpoſition is commonly known by a taſte for the beauties of the animal and the vegetable creation.

The nothern countries of Europe are by no means well adapted to the true enjoyment of rural ſcenery. Our vernal ſeaſons, which the poets celebrate in all the luxuriance of deſcription, are commonly rendered cold and uncomfortable, by the long continuance of an eaſterly wind. Our poets borrowed their ideas of a ſpring form the poets of Italy, who collected theirs form nature. A genial day in April is, among us, the ſubject of general congratulation. And, while the lilac bloſſoms, and the laburnum drops its golden

clusters, the shivering possessor of them is constrained to seek warmth at the side of his chimney. Yet, from the temperature of our climate we derive a beauty unknown in the gardens of a warmer country. Few objects are more pleasing than the smooth lawn; but the soft verdure which constitutes its beauty, is not to be found in more southern climates. It is certainly true, that the rarity of our truly vernal weather, like that of other delights, increases the pleasures of it; and it is probable, for this reason, that an Englishman, notwithstanding his complaints against his atmosphere, enjoys the pleasures of a garden in their full perfection. A fine day, says Sir William Temple, is a kind of sensual pleasure; but surely it would cease to be such if every day were fine.

A practical attention to a garden, is by some esteemed a degrading employment. It is true, indeed, that pastoral and agricultural manners, if we may form a judgment from the dignified descriptions of Virgil, are greatly degenerated. The employments of shepherds and husbandmen are now become mean and sordid. The work of the garden is usually left to a peasant. Nor is it unreasonable to assign the labour, which wearies without amusement, to those who are sufficiently amused by the prospect of their wages. But the operations of grafting, of innoculating, of pruning, of transplanting, are curious experiments in natural philosophy; and that they are pleasing as well as curious, those can testify who remember what they felt on seeing their attempts in the amusement of practical gardening attended with success.

Among the employments suitable to old age, Cicero has enumerated the superintendance of a garden. It requires no great exertion of mind or body; and its satisfactions are of that kind which please without violent agitation. Its beneficial influence on health is an additional reason for an attention to it at an age when infirmities abound.

In almost every description of the seats of the blessed, ideas of a garden seem to have predominated. The word Paradise itself is synonymous with garden. The fields of Elysium, that sweet region of poesy, are adorned with all that imagination can conceive to be delightful. Some of

the moſt pleaſing paſſages of Milton, are thoſe in which he repreſents the happy pair engaged in cultivating their bliſſful abode. Poets have always been delighted with the beauties of a garden. Lucan is repreſented by Juvenal as repoſing in his garden. Virgil's Georgics prove him to have been captivated with rural ſcenes; though to the ſurpriſe of his readers, he has not aſſigned a book to the ſubject of a garden. Our Shenſtone made it his ſtudy; but, with all his taſte and fondneſs for it, he was not happy in it. The captivating ſcenes which he created at the Leaſowes, afforded him, it is ſaid, little pleaſure in the abſence of ſpectators. The truth is, he made the embelliſhment of his grounds, which ſhould have been the amuſement of life, the buſineſs of it; and involved himſelf in ſuch troubles, by the expences it occaſioned, as neceſſarily excluded tranquil enjoyment.

It is the lot of few, in compariſon, to poſſeſs territories like his, extenſive, and ſufficiently well adapted to conſtitute an ornamented farm. Still fewer are capable of ſupporting the expence of preſerving it in good condition. But let not the rich ſuppoſe they have appropriated the pleaſures of a garden. The poſſeſſor of an acre, or a ſmaller portion, may receive a real pleaſure, from obſerving the progreſs of vegetation, even in a plantation of culinary plants. A very limited tract properly attended to, will furniſh ample employment for an individual. Nor let it be thought a mean care; for the ſame hand that raiſed the cedar, formed the hyſop on the wall. Even the orchard, cultivated ſolely for advantage, exhibits beauties unequalled in the ſhrubbery; nor can the green-houſe produce an appearance to exceed the bloſſom of the apple and the almond.

Amuſement reigns, ſays Dr. Young, man's great demand. Happy were it, if the amuſement of managing a garden were more generally reliſhed. It would ſurely be more conducive to health, and the preſervation of our faculties to extreme old age, were that time, which is now devoted to the dice and to the card-table, ſpent in the open air, and in active employment.

No. XCII. ON THE GRAVE AND GAY SPECIES OF PHILOSOPHY.

THE world has ever been viewed by men of different diſpoſitions, in a light totally different. The thoughtful and melancholy have repreſented it as a vale of miſery; the gay and the volatile, as a theatre abounding with delightful entertainments, if the ſpectators are but in good humour. The whole difference, indeed, it has been ſaid, ariſes from the various ſtate of the minds of men, and not from any inconſiſtent diverſity in the conſtitution of things. It would therefore ſeem probable, that the greater part would embrace the more agreeable ſide, from motives of ſelf-intereſt and gratification. But the truth is there are almoſt as many followers of Heraclitus as of Democritus.

That there is an eſſential difference in the original form of minds, there is no doubt; and to this cauſe it is to be attributed, that ſome are gloomy, others cheerful. But habit is often no leſs concerned than nature. For it is remarkable that, among moral writers, thoſe who have enjoyed wealth and the company of the great, and who conſequently partook of various pleaſures, have commonly choſen the comfortable kind of philoſophy; while they who were oppreſſed by want, and excluded from enjoyment, have no leſs naturally repreſented life, ſuch as they found it, as a ſtate of miſery interrupted only by ſhort lived and unſubſtantial gratifications.

The Engliſh nation is characteriſtically grave; and of courſe the graver kind of philoſophy has been much cultivated in England. There are few books that pleaſe more generally than the Night Thoughts of Young. Harvey's Meditations are more frequently read than many works of humour, and Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progreſs has given as much pleaſure among the Engliſh vulgar as the Quixote of Cervantes.

But our increaſe of wealth, and our imitation of French and Aſiatic manners, have greatly altered our natural diſ-

poſition. We begin to reliſh none but the gayer kind of philoſophy. Horace would at preſent be more read than Juvenal, and Lucian than Seneca.

Every admirer of dignified diction and of ſolid ſenſe muſt be delighted with the Rambler; and yet it has been ſaid, that the World, and other leſs ſolid performances, have been more univerſally read and approved, at leaſt in the politer circles. It muſt indeed be confeſſed, that beſides ſome affectations which juſtly give offence, thoſe excellent papers induce a melancholy by no means compatible with an active or a pleaſurable life. They inſpire virtuous ſentiments, but they depreſs thoſe ſpirits which are neceſſary to put them in practice. I venerate the old age of their juſtly celebrated author; I admire his great exertions; and when I aſſert, that the gloomy grandeur of ſome among his moral writings communicates a ſympathetic melancholy to the reader's mind, I by no means detract from his literary honours.

The philoſophy of Epicurus is in ſome degree adopted by the greater part, moſt of whom embrace his tenets without having heard of his name. The truth is, human nature is naturally inclined to purſue pleaſure, and to avoid all that has the appearance of wretchedneſs and woe. Even they who devote themſelves to melancholy find a gloomy pleaſure in it; a pleaſure ſcarcely recogniſed by the gay and luxurious, but yet real and ſatisfactory.

The ſevere philoſophy, though leſs agreeable to the gayer ranks, is the more favourable to virtue. Seneca and Antoninus are ſevere moraliſts. They exhibit life in its pleaſing aſpects, and exact duties not to be performed without painful efforts. But they call forth the latent powers of the mind, and by requiring an exertion beyond the natural ſtrength, really compel it to effect all that it is able. Indolence prevents men in general from effecting all that they are able. The pleaſurable ſyſtem diſſuades them from the attempt. And if there were not ſome auſtere inſtructors, and ſome faithful followers of them, there would not be active virtue enough in a community to preſerve its political exiſtence.

In the earlier periods of ſociety the grave philoſophy is

moſt cultivated. For then virtuous exertions are moſt neceſſary, and luxurious indulgences precluded. Succeſs, and increaſe in wealth and glory, are the uſual conſequence. Luxury ſucceeds in a courſe, as certain in all its ſtages, as any phyſical progreſs. A taſte for a light, cheerful, fanciful philoſophy, ſoon explodes the ſullen precepts of rigid moraliſts. Manners are relaxed, and naturally bring on a declenſion of empire. At leaſt all regard for liberty is loſt; and the mind, enervated with pleaſure, gladly ſinks in the repoſe of deſpotiſm.

It is evident that in our own country, the ſeverer philoſophy loſes ground. This, among many others, is a ſymptom of corruption, and the harbinger of decay. An imitation of French manners has greatly accelerated this revolution in our ſentiments. And after all, it is a forced and unnatural change; for an Engliſhman, whether from the influence of climate, or ſome cauſe inherent in his conſtitution, is by nature grave, and diſpoſed to admit manly thoughts, and to practiſe manly actions.

The influence of books on the national manners in a community, of which almoſt every member devotes ſome part of his time to reading, muſt be important. And among other methods which might be uſed to excite the ſpirit of patriotiſm and political virtue, it might be proper to reſtore a taſte for ſolid and ſevere morality, and to explode thoſe light, ſuperficial, ſentimental and affected productions, which, while they pleaſe the fickly mind encreaſe its imbecility.

No. XCIII. ON MONUMENTAL INSCRIPTIONS.

IT was the early wiſh of Pope, that when he died, not a ſtone might tell where he lay. It is a wiſh that will commonly be granted with reluctance. The affection of thoſe whom we leave behind us, is at a loſs for methods to diſplay its wonted ſolicitude, and ſeeks conſolation under ſorrow, in doing honour to all that remains. It is natural that filial piety, parental tenderneſs, and conjugal love, ſhould mark, with ſome fond memorial, the clay-cold ſpot

where the form, ſtill foſtered in the boſom, moulders away. And did affection go no farther, who could cenſure? But, in recording the virtues of the departed, either zeal or vanity often leads to an exceſs perfectly ludicrous.

A marble monument, with an inſcription palpably falſe and ridiculouſly pompous, is far more offenſive to true taſte, than the wooden memorial of the ruſtic, ſculptured with painted bones, and decked out with death's-head in all the colours of the rainbow. There is an elegance and a claſſical ſimplicity in the turf-clad heap of mould which covers the poor man's grave, though it has nothing to defend it from the inſults of the proud but a bramble. The primroſe that grows upon it is a better ornament than the gilded lies on the oppreſſor's tombſtone.

The proſtitution of praiſe is injurious to virtue. That imaginary life after death, which conſiſts in a remembrance of our worth cheriſhed in the breaſts of others, though it is deſpiſed by the ſevere reaſoner, has commonly been an additional motive for exertion to the nobleſt ſpirits that have dignified human nature. But when we ſee the ſtudied panegyric engraven on the marble that incloſes the remains of the worthleſs, we deſpiſe the eulogium that mankind are mean enough to beſtow on every one that will pay the maſon. Thus one powerful motive is loſt, which might operate on the generous in ſtimulating them to a worthy conduct.

On the tombſtones of the truly great, it is certainly right that an inſcription ſhould be written conſiſtent with their dignity. In order to be ſo, it muſt not be prolix. When their names and age make all the ſepulchral hiſtory of diſtinguiſhed perſonages, it ſeems to be implied that the reſt is ſufficiently known; but when the marble ambitiouſly enlarges on their excellence, it argues that the world wants the information. It is better that the paſſenger, when he ſees an eminent name, ſhould recollect, while he ſtrikes his penſive boſom, the virtues of its owner, than that his remarks ſhould be anticipated by an obtruding narrative.

The ſtyle of epitaphs uſually adopted has been too diffuſe. The noble ancients, thoſe patterns of unaffected magnificence, conſulted real dignity in the brevity of their epi-

taphs. As an historical monument, at an age when printing was unknown, they sometimes engraved the exploits of a warrior on the marble; but in general they recorded little more than the name of the departed. The Grecian muse sometimes poured the sweet melody of verse at the shrine of a poet or hero; but she never condescended to mean flattery, nor displayed the bloated ostentation of a modern panegyric.

There are many excellent epitaphs in the English language, both in verse and prose. In the diffuse kind, that on the infamous Chartres is a fine model. Westminster Abbey exhibits many inscriptions written with manly, forcible, and energetic elegance. The great fault has been, a redundance of epithets in the superlative degree.

We have also many fine poetical epitaphs. Those of Dryden and Pope are the most deservedly celebrated; tho' those of Pope have been severely criticised. In general, the metrical are inferior to the prosaic. Some of the best are crowded with antitheses, a fault which renders them inferior to the Grecian; and some of the worst, many of which are found in the most public cemeteries, stand forth a disgrace to national taste. The love of rhyme descends to the lowest ranks. The parish-clerk is commonly called upon for a stave or two of verses, by every rustic that can raise a post and rail to the memory of his relation; and there are few church-yards in the kingdom, where that favourite stanza "Afflictions sore long time I bore," occurs not more than once.

But our epitaphs are most commonly written in Latin; probably because it is intelligible to foreigners; and is capable of more elegance and elevation. Our country has produced many writers remarkable for beautiful latinity: accordingly we find inscriptions in every part of the kingdom abounding with classical expressions. The misfortune has been, that many of them have encroached on the province of heraldry; and real dignity has been lost in the affectation of it, in a tedious and circumstantial detail of descents, pedigrees, and relationship. The reader is tired, before he has obtained a clear idea of the character and family described. His eyes have failed, even if his attention persevered.

The epitaph on the pious Nelson, for instance, consists of above eighty lines.

The punning and epigrammatic epitaph was much in fashion a century or two ago. That on fair Rosamond at Godstow might surely have been replete with the tenderest sentiment, but it is merely a wretched distich of puns and monkish rhymes. This species is at present quite exploded, and little need be said to prove its great impropriety. False wit is always misplaced; but the true seems to be excluded from the epitaph. Who can bear merriment or buffoonery on a tombstone? The tender and elegiac, or the manly and severe style, seems to be best adapted to the monumental inscription. But neither the pathetic nor sublime is compatible with the ludicrous.

The authors of our epitaphs are seldom known. One of the best that I can recollect, was the classical Bourne. The few he has left us are master-pieces. That in Westminster Abbey, on Dickenson the architect, is truly sublime.

In our island there has certainly been no dearth of genius for monumental inscriptions; though there is one circumstance which might induce a foreigner to think the contrary. The famous Duchess of Marlborough is said to have offered, without success, five hundred pounds for an epitaph adequate to the dignity of her Duke. Her grace, whose taste was not very just, would probably have expected a history long enough to cover with inscription the unwieldy pile of stones called Blenheim-house. I cannot help thinking, that a tedious epitaph, minutely relating his atchievements, would rather lessen than exalt him in the eyes of mankind. Would not Alexander the great have appeared rather beneath the dignity of that name, if it had been written on his tomb, that the son of Philip was reputed to have been, in his day, the wisest general, the boldest hero, the most accomplished man, with a hundred other encomiastic epithets? would he have excited much admiration, if he had been handed down to us, merely in an epitaph abounding with those inflated superlatives, which Gothic ideas of grandeur have now introduced? It might have served as a complimentary epitaph on an alderman, who died of repletion; and would perhaps

have borne some analogy to him in the circumstance of unnatural tumour.

No. XCIV. CURSORY THOUGHTS ON BIOGRAPHY.

AMONG the many arguments advanced to recommend the study of history, it has been said, that it teaches wisdom without the danger of experience, and, by pointing out the paths of those who have gone before us, facilitates the journey of life. History has been called philosophy teaching by examples. But after all, it must be allowed, that civil history at large is less capable of regulating moral than political conduct. The descriptions of battles, the accounts of debates, the characters of kings and heroes, contain very little that can direct the actions of the private and the more numerous ranks in the community.

But an exact and authentic account of individuals, who have greatly excelled in any of the departments of active or contemplative life, seems to be a mode of instruction best suited to an animal, like man, prone to imitation. When a single character is distinctly delineated, we can pursue the outline, with an ease equal to that with which the painter copies from the original picture placed before his eyes. We have the express authority of the pattern we have chosen to direct us in every emergency, and can tread, with implicit confidence, in the footsteps of the most distinguished men, without the suspense of deliberate selection. It is a remark of Aristotle, that the story of an individual, as it is a single object, is comprehended more fully, and therefore attended to with greater pleasure, than a history in which many personages are introduced.

For these reasons, biography appears to be more instructive than civil history, though it has commonly been written with a less degree of attention. Herodotus is all sweetness. Thucidides exhibits the solid and austere beauties. Xenophon, the Attic bee, presents us with a style flowing with honey. Livy displays a most masterly composition, and paints in glowing colours all that he relates. Sallust

rivals his Grecian maſter; Guicciardin and Vertot have exhibited in their writings ſome of the genuine graces of the hiſtoric muſe. But among biographers, ſcarcely any can juſtly claim a rank with the firſt writers of the golden age.

As a diligent collector of facts, as a warm friend to virtue, as an entertaining narrator, I venerate the name of Plutarch. His writings bear evident marks of extenſive reading, and communicate much, and multifarious knowledge. Theodore Gaza has ſaid, that if all books were loſt, and he might recover one, it ſhould be Plutarch. He is indeed an invaluable treaſure of ancient learning; for he ſelected paſſages from books now totally loſt, and inſerted them very liberally in his works. Add to this, that he is an admirable moraliſt. But his judgment ſeems not to have been always ſtrong enough to manage the unwieldy maſs of learning he had aſſembled. He indulged the weakeſt ſuperſtition. He is ever relating ſtories which Horace calls ANILES, or the tales of old women. Merely for an oſtentatious diſplay of erudition, he digreſſes beyond all reaſonable limits. His idea of drawing paralels was excellent; and he has ſometimes drawn them admirably, though, as the critics ſay, not without a partiality to his own countrymen. They have convicted him of this unphiloſophical attachment in the compariſon between Tully and Demoſthenes, Cato and Ariſtides, Sylla and Lyſander, Marcellus, and Pelopidas.

They who are willing to allow him every other merit, give up his ſtyle as harſh and inelegant. Though certainly an uſeful, he cannot be eſteemed a fine writer; and whatever merit he poſſeſſes, his inſtance does not refute the aſſertion, that biographical has never yet equalled civil hiſtory.

The long and diffuſe accounts of Plutarch have been compared to coloſſal ſtatues; the conciſe hiſtories of Cornelius Nepos to medallions. Cornelius Nepos has a claim, from the age he flouriſhed in, from his language, and from his fidelity, to the rank of a claſſic; but by no means to the firſt rank. It is ſuſpected by many, that as Trogus was epitomiſed by Juſtin, ſo Nepos was abbreviated by a writer who flouriſhed under Theodoſius in the decline of polite literature. The life of Atticus, if we may pronounce from internal evidence, continues unaltered, and reflects

great honour on its writer, as a fine picture of a beautiful original.

Diogenes Laertius chose a subject well adapted to display ingenuity. The lives of the wisest men whom the world ever produced, if well written, would have been a most valuable acquisition to ancient learning. But, with a fine subject, he is deemed by the critics a poor writer.

It is to be wished, that Tacitus had more frequently exercised his talents in biography. His life of Agricola is, perhaps, the best biographical work that was ever composed. It is written in that beautiful energetic style, which characterises this spirited historian; and it is more pleasing than his other works, because it exhibits not a deformed portrait. Mallet's life of Bacon is a good imitation of it.

Suetonius probably drew his pictures from the life, and they are loathsome to behold. They are, however, useful to the philosopher, as they enable him to form a more complete idea of human nature in all the gradations of degeneracy and perfection. They are also tolerably well written. Concise, nervous, simple, they please by their perspecuity, and their freedom from ambitious ornament. To the honour of their author, it must be said, that he appears to have advanced nothing through flattery or resentment, nor to have suppressed any thing through fear, but to have paid an undaunted regard to veracity. Erasmus observes, that he wrote as freely as the emperors whom he described had lived.

It is matter of surprise and regret, that we have not more biographers. Thousands and tens of thousands, eminent in every accomplishment, whose examples might have instructed the world, are become as though they had never been. In our own country, it is true, that there are many biographical compilations, but they are for the most part incomplete. Wood's Athenæ, though a book that does honour to the most celebrated university, has no merit as an elegant composition. But I must not omit the tribute of praise to the writer of the life of Cicero; who has given us a most accurate account of one of the greatest men that ever lived, in a style truly classical and manly. The public is

alſo indebted to the author of the Rambler for many maſterly pieces of biography. His portraits would be more univerſally and permanently pleaſing, if he had not too often indulged his ſpleen, and converted a harſhneſs of feature into extravagant caricature. I never could admire either the writings or the life of the chief object of his panegyric, the unfortunate Savage.

Worth is often unknown, or known imperfectly, till after death; till that period when it is too late to learn particular circumſtances with accuracy. Hence it has happened that many of our ſecond-rate authors and actors in every department of life, though richly deſerving a place in the annals of fame, are reckoned only in thoſe volumes where to be born and die, as Pope ſays, makes all the hiſtory.

To preſerve their own actions from oblivion and miſrepreſentation, ſome writers have been their own biographers. The taſk requires great delicacy. The very attempt indeed implies a conſiderable degree of ſelf-value; but it has been juſtified by the examples of Thuanus and others.

There has appeared in our times and country a biographical work on an extenſive plan. The firſt edition of the Biographia Britannica was well deſigned, yet unequally and upon the whole indifferently executed. Many diſtinguiſhed lives are totally omitted; many which are inſignificant tediouſly deſcribed. Though there is ſometimes much labour and ſagacity exerted, yet there are few maſterly remarks. Moſt of the articles were furniſhed by writers of no great repute; and there was every reaſon for the new edition now undertaken. If I might preſume to ſuggeſt an improvement, I would adviſe, that elegantly engraved heads ſhould be prefixed to every life, whenever they can be procured; and that the materials ſhould not be collected from books only, but from the traditionary reports and the manuſcript letters remaining in the families of deſcendants. The names of the living perſons who communicate the hints ſhould be added, both to ſecure and to confirm their authenticity.

In the ſecond edition, which is now preparing, though the embelliſhment of plates is not adopted, yet many other moſt important improvements are made, particularly that of collecting materials from traditionary as well as printed

documents. I am informed that the learned and accurate editor is in poſſeſſion of a great number of anecdotes of this kind; and there is every reaſon to believe that, under his conduct, the work will reflect new honour on the Britiſh nation.

No. XCV. ON HOSPITALITY, AND THE CIVILITIES OF COMMON LIFE.

IN the days of Horace, our countrymen were reputed to be ſavage in their behaviour to ſtrangers. Though in the preſent age the charge would be unjuſt, yet it muſt be owned, that there is a reſerve in the manner of an unadulterated Engliſhman, which ſeems to confirm the opinion, that he inherits a portion of that unſocial ſpirit which diſgraced his anceſtors. But whatever may be his natural propenſity, it is certain that, in the liberal intercourſe and comprehenſive education which prevail in the preſent times, there is ſcarcely any country in the world where a more cordial hoſpitality is diſplayed, than in ſome parts of England.

The days of Elizabeth have been extolled as the days of genuine hoſpitality. The doors were thrown open, and, at the ſound of the dinner bell, all the neighbouring country crowded to the ſmoking table. Theſe were happy times, indeed, ſays the railer againſt modern refinement. Yet it has been juſtly doubted, whether this indiſcriminate hoſpitality was laudable. There was ſomething generous and magnificent in the idea, and it gave the nobles of the land the influence of kings over their neighbourhood. Yet if its motives and its moral effects are conſidered, it will appear to be juſtly exploded. It proceeded from the love of power and from oſtentation, and it produced gluttony, drunkenneſs, and all their conſequent vices.

Conſidered in a charitable light, as affording food to the hungry, it will be found a leſs uſeful mode than the modern inſtitutions for the accompliſhment of that purpoſe. Beſides, it did not ſelect its objects: it conſidered not the degrees of indigence or of deſert. The conſequence was, that

it increased indigence and lessened desert; for experience has proved, that unnecessary alms, however amiable the motive of them, do a real injury where they mean a benefit. They promote idleness, by teaching poverty to rely on other aid than the efforts of an honest industry.

The great number of houses now established for the reception of travellers in every part of the kingdom, and the expeditious modes of travelling, which render delay unnecessary, have contributed to restrain that general hospitality which opened the door to all who came. Such hospitality is no longer wanted; but there never was a time when judicious civility of all kinds was more liberally shewn to strangers than the present. And whatever the old Romans or the modern Gauls may assert of British ferocity of manners, no Italian or Frenchman of character ever came to our separated shore, *toto divisos orbe Britannos*, without having felt delight at his hearty reception, and regret on his departure.

It seems probable that hospitality keeps pace with civilization. As the minds of a people are enlarged by improvements in knowledge, and communication with their neighbours, the selfish and the morose affections gradually lose ground. In several parts of Europe, where social improvements has not yet reached, the traveller is either considered as lawful prey, or totally disregarded. On the other hand, we find the natives of the Society Isles, separated as they are from all the rest of the world, and by no means far removed from the savage state, remarkably hospitable. Though fear might in some degree cause their civility to Europeans, yet it was not the sole motive of it; for we find their good offices, after all apprehensions were removed, evidently proceeding from the tenderest and most generous affection. On the first appearence of the English on their coasts they naturally considered them as enemies, and boldly opposed their invasion. Many of them exhibited acts of heroism, in defence of their country, scarcely exceeded in the annals of antiquity. But no sooner was the branch of peace held out, than they received their wonderful visitors with open arms; with a humanity that reflects disgrace on the maritime villages of Europe, where a shipwrecked fellow-crea-

ture and fellow-countryman has been deſtroyed for the ſake of plundering his veſſel. In other iſlands diſcovered by our circumnavigators, we find, that no kindneſs could mitigate the ferocity of the rude child of nature. The hoſpitality of barbarians, like all virtues that proceed not from principle but from humour and accidental cauſes, is of little value. A clearer light than the light of nature is neceſſary to give a ſteady operation to the feelings of humanity.

The idea which chriſtianity has ſuggeſted of the relation in which all men ſtand to each other, is wonderfully adapted to promote univerſal hoſpitality. When we conſider all men as brothers, we ſhall naturally receive the ſtranger within our gates with cordial kindneſs, as a relation whom we have never ſeen before, and to whom we wiſh to diſplay ſome ſignal of our love. It is indeed true, that many who are juſtly eſteemed worthy perſons, do not reduce this generous idea to practice; and the reaſon ſeems to be, that they ſuffer the attachments of domeſtic life, and the connections of conſanguinity, to engroſs the whole of their affections. Add to this, that the actual exerciſe of beneficence requires ſomething which is leſs in our power than benevolence.

However juſt the complaints of the miſery of life, yet great occaſions for the diſplay of beneficence and liberality do not often occur. But there is an hourly neceſſity for the little kind offices of mutual civility. At the ſame time that they give pleaſure to others, they add to our own happineſs and improvement. Habitual acts of kindneſs have a powerful effect in ſoftening the heart. An intercourſe with poliſhed and humane company, tends to improve the diſpoſition, becauſe it requires a conformity of manners. And it is certain, that a ſenſe of decorum, and of a proper external behaviour, will reſtrain thoſe whoſe natural temper would otherwiſe break out in acrimonious and petulant converſation. Even the affectation of philanthropy will in time contribute to realiſe it. The pleaſure reſulting from an act of kindneſs naturally excites a wiſh to repeat it; and indeed the general eſteem which the character of benevolence procures, is ſufficient to induce thoſe to wiſh for it, who act only from the mean motives of ſelf-intereſt.

As we are placed in a world where natural evil abounds, we ought to render it ſupportable to each other, as far as human endeavours can avail. All that can add a ſweet ingredient to the bitter cup muſt be infuſed. Amid the multitude of thorns, every flower that will grow muſt be cultivated with care. But neither pomp nor power are of themſelves able to allevate the load of life. The heart requires to be ſoothed by ſympathy. A thouſand little attentions from all around us are neceſſary to render our days agreeable. The appearance of neglect in any of thoſe with whom we are connected, chills our boſom with chagrin, or kindles the fire of reſentment. Nothing therefore ſeems ſo likely to enſure happineſs, as our mutual endeavours to promote it. Our ſingle endeavours, originating and terminating in ourſelves, are uſually unſucceſsful. Providence has taken care to ſecure that intercourſe which is neceſſary to the exiſtence of ſociety, by rendering it the greateſt ſweetner of human life.

By reciprocal attentions we are enabled to become beneficent without expence. A ſmile, an affable addreſs, a look of approbation, are often capable of giving a greater pleaſure than pecuniary benefits can beſtow. The mere participation of the ſtudies and amuſements of others, at the ſame time that it gratifies ourſelves, is often an act of real humanity; becauſe others would not enjoy them without companions. A friendly viſit in a ſolitary hour, is often a greater act of kindneſs than a valuable preſent.

It is really matter of ſurpriſe, that thoſe who are diſtinguiſhed by rank and opulence ſhould ever be unpopular in their neighbourhood. They muſt know the value of popularity, and ſurely nothing is more eaſily obtained by a ſuperior. Their notice confers honour; and the aſpiring heart of man is always delighted with diſtinction. A gracious look from them diffuſes happineſs on the lower ranks. But it uſually happens, that an overgrown rich man is not the favourite of a neighbouring country; and it is unfortunate, that pride or inadvertence often prevent men from acting the godlike part of making others happy, even when they might do it without inconvenience to themſelves.

No. XCVI. ON THE MERIT OF ILLUSTRIOUS BIRTH.

THERE is scarcely any truth of which the world has been more frequently reminded by the moralists, than the unreasonableness of that veneration which is paid to birth. They have been told, that virtue alone is true nobility; but though they have acknowledged the assertion to be founded in reason, they have continued, with uniform perseverance, in the same error. The luminous glory of an illustrious ancestor, seems to have diffused a brilliancy over a long line of descendants, too opaque of themselves to emit any original irradiations.

Gratitude, which first raises a benefactor to a distinguished rank in civil honours, is willing to continue its kindness to his immediate offspring. The distinction is rendered hereditary. This predilection for an ancestor soon leads to the accumulation of honours and possessions in his successors; and the incense originally offered because it was deserved, is at last lavished at the shrine of opulence, independently of merit.

Subordination is, indeed, essential to society. The order of nobles, as hereditary guardians of the laws, is found an useful political establishment; and none seem so well adapted to supply it, as they who have been raised to eminence by their ancestors, and who possess a territorial patrimony in the land which they are to protect. All that is contended for is, that the recommendation of birth may not set aside or depreciate real merit, the praise of learning, and the intrinsic value of virtuous exertions.

It is a remarkable circumstance in the history of mankind, that some of the best books have been written, and some of the greatest atchievements performed, by those whose origin was truly plebeian. The politest and genteelest books, whether the sentiments or the style be considered, have been produced by slaves, or the descendants of slaves. Horace, Phœdrus, and Terence, wrote in a style which must have been the standard of a court, to an inter-

course with which they were by no means entitled by their extraction. The founders of the most distinguished families emerged from the middle and the lower classes, by the superior vigour of their natural abilities, or by extraordinary efforts, assisted by Providence. And unless the adventitious circumstances of wealth and civil honours can effect a change in the constituent principles of the mind and body, there is certainly no real superiority to be derived in a boasted pedigree of Tudors and Plantagenets.

And yet there have appeared flatterers who have indirectly suggested that the minds of the nobility seem to be cast in a finer mould, and to have an elegance inherent in their original constitution. According to this hypothesis, we must go on to suppose, that the mind of a commoner exalted to the higher order of senators, catches this elegance by the contagion of invisible effluvia. On his creation he undergoes a kind of new birth, and puts off the *exuviæ* which encumbered and degraded him in the lower regions. Thus are all the occult perfections of noble blood to be infused by the mandate of a monarch. But no, said Maximilian to a man who asked to be enobled by him, though I can give you riches and a title, I cannot make you noble.

In truth, there is many a nobleman, according to the genuine idea of nobility, even at the loom, at the plough, and in the shop; and many more in the middle ranks of mixed society. This genuine idea contains in it generosity, courage, spirit, and benevolence, the qualities of a warm and open heart, totally unconnected with the accidental advantages of riches and honour; and many an English sailor has possessed more of the real hero than a lord of the admiralty.

If indeed there is any substantial difference in the quality of their blood, the advantage is probably on the side of the inferior classes. Their indigence and their manual employments require temperance and exercise, the best purifiers of the animal juices. But the indolence which wealth excites, and the pleasures which fashionable life admits without restraint, have a natural tendency to vitiate and enfeeble the body as well as the mind. And among the many privileges inherited by him who boasts nobility in his veins, he com-

monly receives the seeds of the most painful and the impurest diseases. He displays indeed a coronet on his coat of arms, and he has a long pedigree to peruse with secret satisfaction; but he has often a gout or a scrophula, which make him wish to exchange every drop derived from his Norman ancestors, for the pure tide that warms a peasant's bosom.

The spirit of freedom, moral, mental, and political, which prevails in England, precludes that unreasonable attachment to birth, which, in the countries of despotism, tends to elevate the noble to a rank superior to humanity. In our neighbour's land, the region of external elegance united with real meanness, the implicit veneration paid to birth, adds to the weight of legal oppression. A Frenchman of the plebeian order attends to a Count or a Marquis with all the silent submission of idolatory; on the contrary, there is no doubt but that an English gondolier would box with the best Lord in the land, if he were affronted by him, without the least regard for his star and ribbon. It would indeed be an additional pleasure to the natural delight of conquest, to have bruised a puny Lord. Even the more refined and polished do not idolise illustrious birth. In truth wealth appears to be the object of more universal veneration. Noble blood and noble titles, without an estate to support them, meet with great compassion indeed, but with little respect; nor is the man who has raised himself to eminence, and who behaves well in it, neglected and despised because he derives no lustre from his forefathers. In a commerical country, where gain is the general object, they who have been most successful in its pursuit will be revered by many, whatever was their origin. In France, where honour is pursued from the monarch to the cleanser of a jakes, the distinction of birth, even with extreme poverty, is enviable. The brother of a Marquis would rather starve on a beggarly pension, than pollute himself with a trade by which he might acquire the revenues of a German kingdom. In our land of good sense this folly is losing ground; and the younger brothers of noble houses often think it no disgrace to rival the heir in a princely fortune acquired by honourable merchandise.

As the world becomes more enlightened, the exorbitant value which has been placed on things not really valuable will decrease. Of all the effects of man's capricious admiration, there are few less rational than the preference of illustrious descent to personal merit, of diseased and degenerate nobility to health, to courage, to learning, and to virtue. Of all the objects of pursuit which are not in our own power, the want of distinguished birth may most easily be dispensed with, by those who possess a solid judgment of that which makes and keeps us happy. There may be some reason to repine at the want of wealth and fame; but he who has derived from his parent health, vigour, and all the powers of perception, need not lament that he is unnoticed at the herald's office.

It has been observed, that virtue appears more amiable, when accompanied with beauty; it may be added, that it is more useful when recommended to the notice of mankind by the distinction of an honourable ancestry. It is then greatly to be wished, that the nobly born would endeavour to deserve the respect which the world pays them with alacrity, by employing their influence to benevolent purposes; to those purposes which can at all times be accomplished, even when the patriotic exertions of the field and cabinet are precluded.

No. XCVII. RELIGIOUS AND MORAL PRINCIPLES NOT ONLY CONSISTENT WITH, BUT PROMOTIVE OF, TRUE POLITENESS AND THE ART OF PLEASING.

A PHILOSOPHER who, in the austerity of his virtue, should condemn the art of pleasing as unworthy cultivation, would deserve little attention from mankind, and might be dismissed to his solitary tub, like his brother Diogenes. It is indeed the dictate of humanity, that we should endeavour to render ourselves agreeable to those in whose company we are destined to travel in the journey of life. It is our interest, it is the source of perpetual satisfaction; it is one of our most important duties as men, and particularly required in the professor of Christianity.

I have therefore lamented, that they who have taken the moſt pains to recommend an attention to the art of pleaſing, have urged it only on the mean motives of ſelf-intereſt. In order to attain the power of pleaſing, they have recommended flattery and deceit; and though they have required in their pupils the appearances of many good qualities, they have not inſiſted on any ſubſtantial and conſiſtent virtue.

It is my wiſh to exalt this amiable talent of pleaſing to the rank of a virtue founded on principle, and on the beſt diſpoſitions of human nature. I would ſeparate it from thoſe varniſhed qualities, which, like whited ſepulchres, are but a diſguiſe for internal deformity. A ſtudent of the art of pleaſing, as it is taught in the ſchool of faſhion, is all ſoftneſs and plauſibility, all benevolence and generoſity, all attention and aſſiduity, all gracefulneſs and gentility. Such is the external appearance; but compare it with his private life, with thoſe actions which paſs unſeen, and you will find them by no means correſpondent. You will uſually find a hard heart, meanneſs, ſelfiſhneſs, avarice, and a total want of thoſe principles from which alone true benevolence, ſincere friendſhip, and gentleneſs of diſpoſition can originate. You will, indeed, find even the appearances of friendſhip and benevolence proportioned to the ſuppoſed riches and rank of him whoſe favour and patronage are cultivated.

It is a favourite maxim with thoſe who teach the art of pleaſing, that if you deſire to pleaſe, you can ſcarcely fail to pleaſe. But what motive, according to their doctrine, is to excite this deſire? A wiſh to render all with whom you converſe ſubſervient to your intereſted purpoſes of avarice or ambition. It is a mean and deſpicable motive, when made the ſole and conſtant principle of converſation and behaviour. If this life is the whole of our exiſtence, if riches and civil honours are the chief good, if truth, honour, and generoſity, are but names to adorn a declamation, then, indeed, they who practiſe the art of pleaſing, according to the vulgar idea of it, are after all, the truly and the only wiſe. But let us not deem ſo meanly of the world and its Creator; and if our favourable opinion of things be an error, it is not only pardonable but glorious; and a generous

man will say, like the noble ancient, he had rather err with a Socrates and a Plato, than be right with a Machiavel.

But indeed the virtues and the graces are much more nearly allied, than they who are strangers to the virtues are willing to acknowledge. There is something extremely beautiful in all the moral virtues, clearly understood and properly reduced to practice. Religion is also declared to be full of pleasantness, in that volume in which its nature is described with the greatest authenticity. It must indeed be allowed, that he who is actuated in his desire of pleasing by morality and religion, may very properly add all the embellishments of external gracefulness; and he may rest assured, that the sincerity of his principles, and the goodness of his character, will ensure a degree of success in his attempts to please, which a false pretender, with all his duplicity, can never obtain.

If true politeness consists in yielding something of our own pretensions to the self-love of others, in repressing our pride and arrogance, and in a gentleness of sentiment and conduct; surely nothing can be more conducive to it than a religion which every where recommends brotherly love, meekness, and humility. I know not how paradoxical my opinion might appear to the fashionable clubs at St. James's, or to the professed men of the world, or to the proficient in what I call the *insincere* art of pleasing; but I cannot help thinking, that a true christian, one who thinks and acts, as far as the infirmity of his nature will permit, consistently with the principles of his religion, possesses qualities more capable of pleasing, than any of those which are said so eminently to have distinguished a Marlborough and a Bolingbroke. The pious and amiable Mr. Nelson seems to me to have deserved the epithet of all-accomplished, much better than he to whom it has been so often applied; and if we may judge of his writings, and the accounts given of his life, as on the one hand, there never was a better christian, so, on the other there never appeared a politer gentleman. It is evident that he derived his art of pleasing, not from a study of the world, or practising the tricks of little worldlings, but from the lovely qualities recommended in the gospel, and from an imitation of the humble Jesus. They

who ſtudy the art of pleaſing will probably have recourſe, as uſual, to the many volumes written on the ſubject in the French language, or to the poſthumous letters of a frenchified Engliſhman; and perhaps they would ſmile if an inſtructor were to refer them, for the beſt rules that have ever been given, to the ſermon on the Mount.

It is however certain, that the art of pleaſing, which is founded on ſincere principles, derived from religion and morality, is as far ſuperior to that baſe art which conſiſts only in ſimulation and diſſimulation, as the fine brilliancy of the real diamond excels the luſtre of French paſte; or as the roſeate hue on the cheek of Hebe, the painted viſage of a haggard courteſan. The inſincere art of pleaſing reſembles the inferior ſpecies of timber in a building, which, in order to pleaſe the eye, requires the aſſiſtance of paint; but the art which is founded on ſincerity, is more like that which diſplays far greater beauty in the variety and richneſs of its own native veins and colour. A ſhort time, or a ſlight touch, deſtroys the ſuperficial beauty of one; while the other acquires new graces from the hand of time.

The rules and doctrines of morality and religion tend to correct all the malignant qualities of the heart; ſuch as envy, malice, pride, and reſentment. In doing this, they cut off the very ſource of diſagreeable behaviour. Morality and religion inculcate whatever is juſt, mild, moderate, candid, and benevolent. In doing this, they effectually promote a ſyſtem of manners, which, without any ſiniſter deſign in the perſon who poſſeſſes them, cannot fail of being agreeable. If to theſe ſubſtantial powers of pleaſing are added the laſt poliſh of a graceful deportment, the habits acquired in good company, an acquaintance with men and manners, a taſte for polite arts and polite books, no other requiſites will be wanting to perfect the art, and form an all-accompliſhed character. A man will be under no neceſſity of hurting his conſcience and reputation in cultivating, I know not what, of a deceitful and affected behaviour. He may be at once pleaſing and reſpectable; and grow in favour with men, without offending God.

It is one circumſtance greatly in favour of that art of pleaſing which I recommend, that, even if it ſhould not

always succeed in pleasing those with whom we converse, it will be sure to please our own hearts; it will be sure to satisfy our conscience with a sense of rectitude at the time we are acting under its direction, and to furnish us with a tranquil delight, unalloyed by the remembrance of treachery and meanness, on a retrospect of our lives and conversations.

No. XCVIII. ON THE GUILT OF INCURRING DEBTS, WITHOUT EITHER A PROSPECT OR AN INTENTION OF PAYMENT.

AMONG the various devices which young men have invented to involve themselves in difficulties and in ruin, none is more frequent than that of incurring debt without any real necessity. No sooner is the aspiring youth emancipated from his school, or his guardian and superintendants, than he becomes, in his own idea, a man, and not only so, but a man of consequence, whom it behoves to dress, and make a figure. To accomplish the purpose of making a figure, some expensive vices are to be affected or practised. But as the stipends of young men just entering into life are usually inconsiderable, it is necessary to borrow on the most disadvantageous terms, or to purchase the various requisites of a pleasurable life on credit. The debt soon accumulates from small beginnings to a great sum. The young adventurer continues, while his credit is good, in the same wild career; but adieu to real pleasure, to improvement, to honest industry, and to a quiet mind. His peace is wounded. A perpetual load seems to weigh him down; and though his feelings may, by length of time and habit, become too callous to be affected by the misery of his situation, yet he is lost to all sincere enjoyment; and if he falls not a victim of despair, survives only to gain a precarious existence at the gaming-table, to deceive the unwary, and to elude the researches of persecuting creditors. Even if he is enabled, by the death of his parents or rich relations, to pay the debts which his youthful

folly has contracted; yet has he suffered long and much, and lost the beginning of life, the season of rational delight and solid improvement, in distress and fears; in fabricating excuses and pretences, and in flying from the eager pursuit of duns and bailiffs.

But this folly, however pregnant with misery, is entitled to pity, and may, in some degree, admit of those usual palliations, youthful ardour, and want of experience. Thousands, and tens of thousands, have ruined their fortunes and their happiness by hastily running into debt before they knew the value of money, or the consequences of their embarrassment. We pity their misfortune, but in the first part of their progress we do not usually accuse them of dishonesty.

But the habit of incurring debt, though in the earlier periods of life it may originate in thoughtlessness, commonly leads to a crime most atrocious in itself, and injurious to society. He who prayed against poverty, lest he should be poor and steal, understood human nature. Difficulties and distresses have a natural tendency to lessen the restraints of conscience. The fortress of honour, when stormed by that sort of poverty which is occasioned by profligacy, and not defended with sound principles (such as men of the world do not often possess,) has for the most part yielded at discretion. He then who began with incurring debt merely because he was strongly stimulated by passion or fancy, and was not able to pay for their gratification, proceeds, when the habit is confirmed, and the first scruples dismissed, to contract debt wherever unsuspecting confidence will afford him an opportunity.

If he possesses titles, distinction, or any kind of eminence, he will not find it difficult to gain credit. Young tradesmen, desirous of making connections, are ready to run any risque; and hope that, if it is long before they receive their money, they shall not be without the great man's patronage or recommendation. But here also they are often deceived; for the great man considers all his creditors as his enemies, and never thinks of them but to contrive methods to avoid and deceive them. If he happens to receive any money, he takes care to expend it among strangers, who

have no other demand upon him but for the commodity which he pays for at the the time of purchaſe. The world is wide; and when one ſet of credulous tradeſmen are wearied with expectation and diſappointment, the great man migrates to another part of the town or country, and condeſcends to honour ſome ambitious, but unfortunate mortal with the honour of dealing with him. Thus he goes on during the greater part of his life, and when the creditors are importunate, and the horrors of a gaol impend, he collects his property and withdraws from the kingdom, or, living in diſguiſe, enjoys his luxuries, and laughs at his deluded tradeſmen. Indeed, as moſt ill qualities go together, his pride is ſo great, that he ſcarcely vouchſafes to beſtow upon them a moment's conſideration.

But while the builder, the draper, the taylor, the butcher, the baker, and the chandler, remain unpaid, the jockey and the horſedealer, the miſt eſs and the brother gameſter, receive ready money with oſtentatious profuſion. Sharpers and proſtitutes, with all the qualities of thievery, riot in thoſe riches which ought to be paid to honeſt men, who, with their families, are reduced to a ſtate of ſtarving, by feeding, clothing, and accommodating ſome hardened profligate, and extravagant debauchee. Who but muſt feel indignation when he ſees a man in high life, as it is called, eating a joint of meat of ſome poor tradeſman, whoſe children are at the ſame moment begging of their parents a morſel of bread? Who ſees, without lifting up his hands, my Lord or ſir John, ſitting joyous at the head of a plentiful table, ſupplied, *gratis*, with every article, by the father of thoſe children?

Indeed, the pride and vanity of ſome perſons, who value themſelves on their birth, or their faſhionable mode of life, induces them to look upon themſelves as a ſuperior order of beings, and to preſume that they have a right to be ſtill ſupported by their tradeſmen in profuſion and elegance, even after they are reduced in their circumſtances either by misfortune or miſconduct. If an honeſt man makes his demand, he is impertinent; his inſolence is not to be borne; he is diſmiſſed; but not till he evidently ſhews that he will no longer ſupply the commodities in which he deals. On his

dismission, some exception is taken to his account; a dispute ensues, and that dispute furnishes the fine gentleman or fine lady with a pretence for not paying the bill. In the mean time card parties, visitings, and all fashionable pleasures proceed as usual—for who would be so vulgar as to attend to the impertinence of the scum of the earth, or suffer one fashionable pleasure to be set aside by the clamorous importunity of a mean mechanic: though his meanness arises from his having spent his substance in supplying the person who despises him with the instruments of luxury, or the necessaries of life?

The profligacy, the vanity, the unceasing pursuit of pleasure, and the passion for external appearance, which characterise the present age, are necessarily productive of expence; expences occasion distress; and distress, where principles are deficient, dishonesty. No wonder then, that in no age have sharpers, swindlers, and insolvent contractors of debt, so much abounded. There is hardly any mode of public life, especially in the metropolis, in which you can be engaged, without having your property exposed to the depredations of villains, who have made cheating a profession, and reduced the art of robbery to a system.

Many of the persons who live on the substance of others, by borrowing, purchasing, or employing, without intending, and without being able to pay, make a splendid figure, and pass for gentlemen and men of honour. But however they may felicitate themselves on their success, and in the gratification of their pride and vanity, I shall not hesitate to pronounce them more criminal and detestable than highwaymen and housebreakers, because, to the crime of actual theft, they add, a most ungenerous breach of confidence.

No. XCIX. CURSORY REMARKS ON THE LIFE, STYLE, GENIUS, AND WRITINGS OF PETRARCH.

ONE of the first and brightest luminaries which appeared in the literary horizon, after a long and dismal night, was the illustrious Francisco Petrarch. He was born

at Arezzo, as he informs us himself, though Voſſus denies it. He became archdeacon of Parma, and canon of the cathedral church of Padua, and might have arrived at the higheſt preferments which the popes can beſtow, if he had not diſdained ſome diſhoneſt and humiliating compliances.

To form an adequate idea of the merit of the writers who arrived at excellence in the dawn of literature, it is neceſſary to conſider, with attention, thoſe peculiar circumſtances which render even a mediocrity of learning a difficult attainment. Books were ſcarce, judicious inſtructors ſtill more uncommon, and the powerful inſtigation of cotemporary models in a great meaſure deficient. Petrarch's claim to entire originality is not however univerſally allowed. He certainly imitated Cino de Piſtoja; and Bayle ſays, he ſtole many of his ſentiments from him. Dante, indeed, preceded Petrarch; but I do not find that he made Dante his model. With real difficulties and impediments, and with few circumſtances to excite a ſpirit of enterpriſe, ſufficiently ardent and perſevering to ſurmount very formidable obſtacles, it is really wonderful that any individual could aſcend, by his own efforts, the eminent heights of ſuperior excellence.

Such, however, was the native force of Petrarch's genius, that, in the middle of an unenlightened age, he became celebrated throughout the civilized nations of Europe as an orator, philoſopher, and poet.

His poetical fame is, indeed, the moſt diſtinguiſhed. Formed with the fineſt ſenſibility of ſoul, he had the peculiar felicity of being born in a country whoſe language is the language of love. The ardour, the conſtancy, and the romantic nature of his paſſion, rendered him univerſally popular in an amorous and romantic age. In our own country he became the pattern of one of our earlieſt poets, Henry Howard earl of Surrey. And amidſt all the diſadvantages of a Northern and Gothic language, the Engliſh poet has celebrated his lovely Geraldine, in ſtrains which are ſaid, by ſome, to diſplay more of the genuine tenderneſs of nature, than thoſe in which the great Italian ſung his Laura.

"In the ſonnets of Surry," ſays Mr. Warton, "we are ſurpriſed to find nothing of the metaphyſical caſt which

marks the Italian poets, his supposed masters, especially Petrarch. Surrey's sentiments are for the most part natural and unaffected, arising from his own feelings, and dictated by the present circumstances. His poetry is alike unembarrassed by learned allusions, or elaborate conceits. If our author copies Petrarch, it is Petrarch's better manner, when he descends from his Platonic abstractions, his refinements of passion, his exaggerated compliments, and his play upon opposite sentiments, into a tract of tenderness, simplicity, and nature. Petrarch would have been a better poet had he been a worse scholar. Yet, upon the whole, I should as soon think of preferring Surrey to Petrarch, as of preferring a Gothic country church to a Grecian temple."

It is certainly true, that several of the poets who have devoted themselves to the description of the tender passion, have shewn that they really did not always feel it in its greatest strength and purity while they wrote. The love which nature inspires does not dictate antithesis, point, conceit, and writticism. But Ovid, the poet of Love, abounds with these even in his most impassioned verse. Cowley's Mistress is by no means replete with the language of passion. I know not that even the gentle Waller expresses the sentiments which a tender and ardent lover feels and utters. Hammond has written like one who was but little smitten with the tender passion. Petrarch, also, has often addressed his verses to the understanding, when they should have been directed to the feelings; has endeavoured to please the imagination with an opposition of images, when all his skill should have been exerted in causing the nerves to vibrate at the touch of sympathy. The mind of the reader is disappointed, when instead of the simple expressions of nature, he finds the subtilty of art; nor does he allow ingenuity on the subject of love to be a compensation for pathos.

It has been said his diction is obscure. The want of perspicuity arises chiefly from his having adopted a great many terms in the provincial language, which, since his time, has ceased to be colloquial in Italy, though it has been preserved by the poets in imitation of their master. The admission of antiquated expressions is allowed by the

beſt judges to be an exquiſite mode of adding a dignity to compoſition. It has been preſcribed by the beſt critics, and practiſed by the beſt writers. And, with reſpect to the obſcurity it may occaſion, the fault is in the reader. Poetry has a language of its own. For the ſake of elevation it is conſtrained to ſeek a diction remote from converſation or familiar proſe. He who reads and criticiſes poetry, ought to be acquainted with its peculiar and idiomatic language. Homer, Virgil, Milton, wrote in a diction which will not be underſtood by him who has been ſolely converſant in the proſaic writings of their ſeveral languages. This, indeed, may be juſtly ſaid, that the dignity of the epopœa may require this method of contracting a venerable air, much more than the humbler ſtrains of the plaintive inamorato. If any part of Petrarch's obſcurity ariſes from the confuſion of his ideas, or his perplexed method of expreſſing them, no veneration for his name muſt protect him from cenſure. Indeed ſeveral very able critics have complained, that they could not underſtand him without an interpreter.

Enough of his meaning and of his beauties has been underſtood by his own countrymen, to give him the title of the Father of the Tuſcan poetry. The claſſical excellence of his language has contributed to give a name to the century in which he lived; for the Italians call it *the good age of their language*, and attribute the happy effect in a great meaſure to Petarch. Sweet, indeed, are the greater part of his ſonnets, ſweet their language, and ſweet their ſentiments. Though criticiſm may point out quaintneſſes and unnatural conceits, may cenſure one part as metaphyſical, and another as affected, yet the ſenſible reader will not judge by parts, but by the whole effect of an entire piece; and if his feelings have been often finely touched, and his imagination delighted, he will give himſelf up to the magic of the poet, and, joining in the general applauſe, leave the cold critic to whiſper his detraction diſregarded.

The love-verſes of many writers cannot be recommended without danger. But the ſort of love which Petrarch felt, ſuppoſing the object a proper one, refines and ennobles humanity. It is a ſpecies of paſſion which was never felt in the ſlighteſt degree by the modern debauchee. It partakes ſome-

thing of the nature of real devotion, and while it elevates human nature in idea, it contributes something to its real exaltation. Chastity was the virtue of the age in which romantic love prevailed, and one virtue is allied to all. The age was virtuous, in comparison with those times in which love is degraded to its lowest species, and even the philosophers endeavour to reduce man to the humiliating condition of a mere animal.

But Petrarch is not to be considered only as an Italian poet: he wrote Latin poetry with great reputation; and, indeed, during his life, seems to have acquired more honour from that, than from his vernacular productions. It was for his Africa that he was crowned with laurel in the capital of Rome. This work was a kind of heroic poem in honour of Scipio Africanus, whose name, says he, I know not how, was dear to me from the earliest age.

His Africa is acknowledged to be an imperfect work. It had not the last hand of its great author; but it abounds with historical matter, and with the fictions of poetry. The hand of a master is visible. The poetical fire sometimes burns with genuine heat and light. Yet, upon the whole, it is a work more conspicuous for genius than judgment, and wants that polish which a better age would certainly have bestowed. Had Petrarch written nothing but Latin poetry he would have possessed but a subordinate place in the temple of fame.

The prose works of Petrarch are voluminous. He indeed is honoured with the name of the restorer of the Latin language. Great was his merit in recalling a language which had almost sunk into oblivion; yet I think it had been fortunate for the reputation of Petrarch, if he had written all his works in his native language, which he possessed in perfection, and which had arrived, under the management of him and his cotemporary, at the standard of classic elegance. Though he writes with spirit, and abounds with striking and solid sentiments, and displays no inconsiderable share of learning, yet he cannot be called a good Latin writer. His style is harsh and uncouth; his sentences rugged and unpolished. There is a singularity of manner which sets him at a remote distance from the classics, and proves that he in-

ſpected their works rather for their matter than their mode of treating it. There is, however, a native force and vivacity, which would have conſtituted diſtinguiſhed excellence, if the writer had condeſcended to have become an imitator of the ancients. The affectation of originality has often ſpoiled an ingenious work, by rendering it quaint and diſguſtful. The greateſt beauty of his proſaic writings, and a very valuable excellence it muſt be eſteemed, is the great and ſerious regard which he pays to piety, and morality, and that ſpirit of philoſophy, which, though of a melancholy kind, is juſt and ſolid.

A reader is doubly pleaſed when he can turn from the works of a diſtinguiſhed writer, to his life, with equal complacency. In the life of Petrarch, we find a noble and ſublime ſpirit, which induced him to prefer his muſe, his love, and his independence, to the favour of a papal deſpot. It is, indeed, the glorious privilege of genius to ſeek and to find its happineſs from its own reſources. Emboldened by the conſciouſneſs of its own ſtrength, and feeling an indignation at many of the changes and chances of this world, it is apt to ſpurn at worthleſs grandeur, and to deſpiſe thoſe whom the multitude adores.

Human nature muſt always have an object ſuſpended in its view. The lovely Laura was the object of Petrarch. The paſſion was romantic; the idea of her excellence imaginary: but it had a happy influence on the poet's mind. It called forth the latent fire of his genius. It exerciſed his fine fancy; and though the poet pours his plaintive verſe in ſtrains which affect our ſympathy, yet we are by no means to conſider him as unhappy. For it is a truth collected from long obſervation on human nature, that the pleaſure of the chace conſiſts in the purſuit, not in the attainment; and that it is often better to expect than to enjoy.

I believe it is not on record, that the paſſion of Petrarch was criminally gratified. It is generally thought that it began and terminated in imagination. But yet it is impoſſible not to lament, that the object of the poet's fanciful idolatry was one on which he could not innocently place his affections.

No. C. ON THE FOLLY AND WICKEDNESS OF WAR.

THE calamities attendant on a ſtate of war ſeem to have prevented the mind of man from viewing it in the light of an abſurdity, and an object of ridicule as well as pity. But if we could ſuppoſe a ſuperior Being capable of beholding us miſerable mortals, without compaſſion, there is, I think, very little doubt but the variety of military manœuvres and formalities, the pride, pomp, and the circumſtance of war, and all the ingenious contrivances for the glorious purpoſes of mutual deſtruction, which ſeem to conſtitute the buſineſs of many whole kingdoms, would furniſh him with an entertainment like that which is received by us from the exhibition of a farce or a puppet-ſhew. But, notwithſtanding the ridiculouſneſs of all theſe ſolemnities, we, alas! are doomed to feel that they are no farce, but the concomitant circumſtances of a moſt woeful tragedy.

The cauſes of war are for the moſt part ſuch as muſt diſgrace an animal pretending to rationality. Two poor mortals, elevated with the diſtinction of a golden bauble on their heads, called a crown, take offence at each other, without any reaſon, or with the very bad one of wiſhing for an opportunity of aggrandizing themſelves, by making reciprocal depredations. The creatures of the court, and the leading men of the nation, who are uſually under the influence of the court, reſolve (for it is their intereſt) to ſupport their royal maſter, and are never at a loſs to invent ſome colourable pretence for engaging the nation in the horrors of war. Taxes of the moſt burthenſome kind are levied, ſoldiers are collected, ſo as to leave a paucity of huſbandmen, reviews and encampments ſucceed, and at laſt fifteen or twenty thouſand meet on a plain, and coolly ſhed each other's blood, without the ſmalleſt perſonal animoſity, or the ſhadow of a provocation.

The kings, in the mean time, and, the grandees, who have employed theſe poor innocent victims to ſhoot bullets at each others heads, remain quietly at home, and amuſe

themſelves, in the intervals of balls, hunting ſchemes, and pleaſures of every ſpecies, with reading at the fireſide, over a cup of chocolate, the diſpatches from the army, and the news in the Extraordinary Gazette. Old Horace very truly obſerves, that whatever mad frolics enter into the heads of kings, it is the common people, that is, the honeſt artiſan, and the induſtrious tribes in the middle ranks, *unoffended* and *unoffending*, who chiefly ſuffer in the evil conſequences. If the king of Pruſſia, were not at the head of ſome of the beſt troops in the univerſe, he would be judged more worthy of being tried, caſt, and condemned at the Old Bailey, than any ſhedder of blood who ever died by a halter. But he is a king; but he is a hero;—thoſe names faſcinate us, and we enrol the butcher of mankind among their benefactors.

When one conſiders the dreadful circumſtances that attend even victories, one cannot help being a little ſhocked at the exultation which they occaſion. I have often thought it a laughable ſcene, if there were not a little too much of the melancholy in it, when a circle of eager politicians have met to congratulate each other on what is called a piece of good news juſt arrived. Every eye ſparkles with delight; every voice is raiſed in announcing the happy event. And what is the cauſe of all this joy? and for what are our windows illuminated, bonfires kindled, bells rung, and feaſts celebrated? We have had a ſucceſsful engagement. We have left a thouſand of the enemy dead on the field of battle, and only nine hundred of our countrymen. Charming news! it was a glorious battle! But before you give a looſe to your raptures, pauſe a while; and conſider, that to every one of theſe nineteen hundred, life was no leſs ſweet than it is to you; that to the far greater part of them there probably were wives, fathers, mothers, ſons, daughters, ſiſters, brothers, and friends, all of whom are at this moment bewailing that event which occaſions your fooliſh and brutal triumph.

The whole time of war ought to be a time of general mourning, a mourning in the heart, a mourning much more ſincere than on the death of one of thoſe princes whoſe curſed ambition is often the ſole cauſe of war. Indeed, that

a whole people ſhould tamely ſubmit to the evils of war becauſe it is the will of a few vain, ſelfiſh, ignorant, though exalted, individuals, is a phenomenon almoſt unaccountable. But they are led away by falſe glory, by their paſſions, by their vices. They reflect not; and indeed, if they did reflect, and oppoſe, what would avail the oppoſition of unarmed myriads to the mandate of a government ſupported by a ſtanding army? Many of the European nations are entirely military; war is their trade; and when they have no employment at home, or near it, they bluſh not to let themſelves out to ſhed any blood, in any cauſe of the beſt paymaſter. Ye beaſts of the foreſt, no longer allow that man is your ſuperior, while there is found on the face of the earth ſuch degeneracy!

Morality and religion forbid war in its motives, conduct, and conſequences; but to many rulers and potentates morality and religion appear as the inventions of politicians to facilitate ſubordination. The principal objects of crowned heads, and their minions, are the extenſion of empire, the augmentation of a revenue, or the annihilation of their ſubjects liberty. Their reſtraints in the purſuit of theſe objects are not thoſe of morality and religion; but ſolely reaſons of ſtate and political caution. Plauſible words are uſed, but they are only uſed to hide the deformity of the real principles. Wherever war is deemed deſirable in an intereſted view, a ſpecous pretext never yet remained unfound. Morality is as little conſidered in the beginning, as in the proſecution of war. The moſt ſolemn treaties and engagements are violated by the governinge part of the nation, with no more ſcruple than oaths and bonds are broken by a cheat and a villain in the walks of private life. Does the difference of rank and ſituation make any difference in the atrocity of crimes? If any, it renders a thouſand times more criminal than that of a thief, the villany of them, who, by violating every ſacred obligation between nation and nation, give riſe to miſeries and miſchiefs moſt dreadful in their nature; and to which no human powe· can ſay, Thus far ſhall ye proceed, and no farther. Are not the natural and moral evils of life ſufficient, but they muſt be rendered more acute, more numerous, and more embittered by artificial means? My heart

bleeds over thoſe complicated ſcenes of woe, for which no epithet can be found ſufficiently deſcriptive. Language fails in labouring to expreſs the horrors of war amid private families who are ſo unfortunate as to be ſituated on the ſeat of it.

War, however, it will be ſaid, has always been permitted by Providence. This is indeed true; but it has been only permitted as a ſcourge. Let a ſpirit and activity be exerted in regulating the morals of a nation, equal to that with which war, and all its apparatus, are attended to, and mankind will no longer be ſcourged, neither will it be neceſſary to evacuate an empire of its members, for none will be ſuperfluous. Let us, according to the advice of a pious divine of the preſent age, think leſs of our fleets and armies, and more of our faith and practice. While we are warriors, with all our pretenſions to civilization, we are ſavages.

No. CI. ON THE EFFECTS OF INTEMPERATE STUDY ON THE HEALTH; AND ON THE DUTY OF PAYING REGARD TO THE PRESERVATION OF HEALTH.

THERE is in genaral but little danger leſt good qualities and habits ſhould be carried to exceſs. The moraliſt may for the moſt part, recommend every laudable and uſeful practice, without preſcribing any boundaries to proficiency. The probability is, that men will ſtop on this ſide, and not that they will go beyond the line of duty. But yet it is certain that there are ſome ingenious ſpirits, who, actuated by a generous emulation, advance in the purſuit of a favourite excellence with ſo immoderate an ardour, and aſſiduity of application, as at once fruſtrates their purpoſe, and injures their abilities.

As I have then, on many occaſions, recommended a cloſe attention to ſtudy, I think myſelf obliged, by motives of humanity, to ſuggeſt a few cautions which may prevent the evils of an intemperate application. I ſhould indeed greatly lament, that any thing I have advanced in recommending

to youth the cultivation of the mind, ſhould lead them to neglect or injure that body on which the vigour of the mind greatly depends, and which, if it is diſordered, often renders all other means of happineſs and improvement ineffectual.

I am indeed the more inclined to enter on this ſubject, as I have ſeen very melancholy inſtances of nervous diſeaſes entirely occaſioned by intemperance in ſtudy, and its neceſſary concomitant, want of air and exerciſe. It is one circumſtance peculiarly unhappy in theſe moſt unhappy of all diſeaſes, that they ſeldom admit of a cure, and therefore great and early vigilance ſhould be exerted in their prevention.

A great ſtudent ought to be particularly attentive in the regulation of his diet. We learn from the writings of phyſicians, that the labour of the brain draws off thoſe ſpirits which are neceſſary to promote digeſtion. The leaſt and the lighteſt food under which we can poſſibly be eaſy, according to the advice of the celebrated Cheney, is particularly proper for the ſtudent. Such a diet will not only render the ſpirits cheerful, and invigorate all the faculties of the mind, but enable us to enjoy health with but a ſmall ſhare of exerciſe. Abſtinence may however be carried to a deſtructive exceſs.

Exerciſe is to be taken on every opportunity. But a ſolitary walk or ride, merely for the ſake of exerciſe, and with no other object to ſtimulate our progreſs, as it is of all amuſements the dulleſt, ſo it is found rather hurtful than advantageous. The mind ſtill meditates in ſolitude, and the body at the ſame time labours; ſo that both are exhauſted at once, and the ſtudent returns to his cloſet, fatigued, dejected, and diſappointed. Some little amuſement muſt therefore be contrived, or ſome buſineſs engaged in, which may operate as a loadſtone in attracting us, without being ſenſible of our own efforts, from our libraries, up the mountain, and along the foreſt, where health with all her thouſand joys, delights to fix her abode. A few cheerful companions in our walks will render them abundantly more healthful; for according to the ancient adage, they will ſerve inſtead of a carriage, or, in other words, prevent the ſenſation of fatigue.

Dejection of spirits is a certain consequence of intemperate study; but dejection of spirits, long continued, cannot consist with health. After a morning spent in a closer application than common; it will often be right to devote the rest of the day to good company, and innocent pleasures. Music is one of those pleasures, and the most delightful soother of the wearied mind. The heart dances at the sound of the lyre; fresh spirits animate the veins; the clouds of dejection are dissipated, and the soul shines out once more like the sun after a mist, in the blue expanse of æther.

Nocturnal studies, too long and too closely continued, seldom fail to injure the eyes, and together with them, the whole nervous system. They who are impelled by necessity to work by night and by day, must indeed submit with patience to their destiny; but that he who is master of his time, should chain himself down to a more exhausting toil than the labour of the galley-slave, is a species of folly approaching to insanity. And, indeed, I know of nothing more likely to produce madness than intemperate study, with want of exercise, want of air, and want of sleep. It will, after all, be but a poor comfort, to have gone through a whole library, and to have lost our eyes and our senses in the course of the laborious progress.

Every man of sense will make use of all the known methods of securing his health, were it merely on selfish motives, and for the sake of preserving his faculties and prolonging his life. But, omitting all selfish regards, I cannot help thinking, that an attention to the preservation of health, is an important duty. I do not recollect that it has often been recommended as a duty. But since our health is greatly in our own power; since we all enter into the world to engage in many active and necessary employments, and since the want of health will render us incapable of them, I cannot help thinking, that the care of our health may be numbered among the duties of indispensable obligation. A sound constitution of body is a blessing of heaven; and not to bestow the utmost vigilance in preserving a pearl of so inestimable a price, is a contempt of the gift, an insult on the Giver, and a species of impious ingratitude.

It is commonly ſaid, that he who wants the advice of phyſicians in the regulation of his uſual diet, after the age of thirty, wants alſo underſtanding; a defect which no phyſician can ſupply. It is indeed certain, that, at the age of thirty, a ſufficient degree of experience of what may be agreeable or diſagreeable to the conſtitution may have been collected. But, alas! few of us are willing to do all that we are able; few of us are ſo attentive, in the firſt portion of life, to the animal œconomy, as to remark with accuracy the cauſes of thoſe ſlight indiſpoſitions which are occaſioned by accidental exceſs in the gay and thoughtleſs hours of convivial enjoyment. We ſubmit to them from friendly and benevolent motives, however they may undermine the conſtitution. We are apt to think, that it would be too ſelfiſh to refuſe to partake of the enjoyments of others merely to preſerve our own health. The midnight aſſembly and the luxurious banquet are often leſs ſought for their own ſakes, than from good-nature and a ſocial diſpoſition. But, perhaps, if we conſidered that we are not taking care of ourſelves merely on our own account, but for others, for our parents and our children, for our friends and for the public, we ſhould not deem a ſcrupulous regard to health, though it may lead us to avoid the feaſt and the revel, either ungenerous or unſocial. It would appear in the light of a very ſerious duty, derived from an obedience to the will of heaven, and from the regard we owe to our neighbour; and we ſhould be obliged to confeſs, that the nominal pleaſures of exceſs ought always to give place to real duty.

A ſcrupulous regard to health is, indeed, a duty incumbent on all; but, perhaps, more particularly to be attended to by the learned and ingenious, as they are of all the moſt ſubject to indiſpoſition. A delicate frame is very often aſſociated with a ſtrong intellect; and a life of ſtudy, tho' a life of labour, is not adapted, like that of the manual labourer, to give elaſticity to the nerves, or vigour to the animal functions. But exceſſive eating, added to exceſſive ſtudy, muſt wear the machine much more than the ſubſtance of which it is conſtituted can long endure. If it is not ſoon broken in pieces, its wheels will be clogged, its ſprings broken, and the whole rendered uſeleſs and burthenſome.

It is recorded of Mr. Pope, that he was an immoderate eater, that he kept a silver saucepan to dress dainties for himself in the intervals of his meals, and that he died of a saucepan of lampreys.

Whatever part of the system of human affairs we examine, one truth appears to pervade the whole complicated mass, which is, that there can be neither wisdom nor happiness, nor even enjoyment of the subordinate kinds, independently of moderation. In the most refined and elevated part of our conduct and pursuits, the same truth is no less visible, than in the lower occupations of common life. Sweet are the pleasures of contemplation, delightful the exercise of the mind in reading and reflection; but no pleasure, however pure, must be invariably pursued, till we are removed into the world of spirits, and are enabled to enjoy intellectual delights unalloyed and uninterrupted.

No. CII. ON THE PRESENT STATE OF CONVERSATION.

THERE is, perhaps, no method of improving the mind more efficacious, and certainly none more agreeable, than a mutual interchange of sentiments in an elegant and animated conversation with the serious, the judicious, the learned, and the communicative. Light and heat are elicited by the collision of minds. Truths, which appeared dull in the solitude of the study, are no sooner agitated in conversation, than they affect the mind with the liveliest impressions. And it is one circumstance which, in a peculiar manner, recommends the mode of improvement by mutual discourse, that the social affections are no less powerfully exerted and exercised, than the powers of reason. By the display of both, the heart and the understanding are at once improved.

Such would be the description of him who should derive his ideas on the subject from a chosen few, or from his books. But let him consider conversation as it really appears in the living world, independently of theoretical and speculative refinement, and I fear, that, instead of finding it always at-

tended with improvement, it will often appear to him a fertile source of corruption and degeneracy.

A young man who has just left his school, full of the ideas which the poets, philosophers, and historians of antiquity supply, will probably bid adieu to them all at the same time that he takes leave of his master; unless, indeed, his own choice should lead him to cultivate an acquaintance with them in private. Suppose him to pass from the school to an university. There, if he has spirit, he will of course seek the company, and imitate the manners, of those who possess a like spirit, and who are also celebrated as men of fashion. The conversation will therefore turn upon the subject of horses, dogs, drinking, dressing, debauchery, of cajoling the old gentleman at home out of his money to be spent in these laudable purposes, or of running in debt with credulous and unfortunate tradesmen. Such will be the sublime contemplations, and the philosophical topics of discourse in the famed academic groves on the banks of the Cam and the Isis, and in the schools of science and theology. Even doctors, professors, tutors, and lecturers, industriously avoid all topics connected with the species of learning and science which they profess, and most agreeably condescend to expatiate, in the common and combination room, on dogs, horses, and all the refined amusements of Granta and Rhedycina. Not but that there are a few who take a pleasure in conversing on letters; but they are solitary mortals, and themselves are stigmatized, in the cant language of the place, with the name of *Quizzes*, and their conversation with that of an unsufferable *Bore*.

If our ingenuous youth should be transplanted from the nursery of a school into the army, he will find the conversation, in almost every respect, similar to that of the university. There will, indeed, be this difference, that as letters are not the particular business of a military life, they will be sometimes the topic of conversation among military men; whereas, in the university, they are entirely laid aside, lest they should subject the academic to the imputation of pedantry; an imputation deemed infinitely more disgraceful than that of genteel ignorance and fashionable debauchery.

Should he be introduced into the society of nobles and

legislators, he will still find dogs and horses, with all their concomitant sports and amusements, the favourite topics of discourse. Literature would be voted dulness; morality, preaching; philosophy, nonsense; and religion, hypocrisy. His Plato and his Tully will avail him little at the Cockpit, at a horse-race, at a gaming-table, in the stud, and the dog-kennel. Such places are the usual resorts of the spirited and fashionable part of very great men; of those, whom the young, allured by the brilliancy of their career, would be most likely to follow.

Let him proceed in his enquiry after this refined and elegant conversation, and frequent, according to the usual intercourse of neighbourhood, the houses of the rich, the respectable, and fashionable, in private life. They shall be persons of sense and virtue, and yet nothing shall pass in their conversation from which any of the boasted advantages of it shall be perceived. For what, indeed, are the methods of passing time, among persons of the best repute and genteelest condition, while they think it indispensably necessary to move in the vortex of fashion? Nothing grave, nothing abstruse, nothing speculative; no moral maxim or critical remark, would be admitted in a polite circle of polite visitors. There is evidently an uneasiness, a silence, an awkwardness, a vacuity, till cards are introduced. It is not a harsh delineation of modern manners to assert, that in general, and even among those who certainly have a right to esteem, there appears to be no taste for any thing that deserves the name of refined and ingenious conversation. The time of a visit is for the most part spent in repeating the doubtful news of the day; in mere chat without consequence or connection; in eating, drinking, and crowning the whole with whist and quadrille. All this may be very innocent and pleasant as a relaxation; and the only point I maintain is, that the species of conversation from which improvement is to be derived, is not often found in the present system of visiting and conversing.

I know not whether our youth, were he to seek the society of men in the professions, would be certain of finding that sort of converse, from which philosophers inform us, so much moral and intellectual improvement is received. It

is, I think, remarked by some one who went into the company of the clergy at one of their feasts, in hopes of finding among them that elegance and philosophical spirit of converse which he had in vain sought among others, that nothing was talked of with any apparent animation, but the flavour of the venison, the fine relish of the hams, the richness of the pyecrust, and the excellence of the claret. These, indeed, caused the most cordial congratulations; and these, interrupted only by the conjectures on the next vacancies in livings, stalls, and mitres, constituted the whole of the discourse in a symposium consisting of the instructors of mankind. If such be the case, we are not to wonder that the sublimer sort of conversation is rarely to be found in the common ranks, who are often too deficient in education, to be able to interchange their sentiments with any considerable advantage to the mind or the morals.

It is said, that a celebrated wit had sought the company of Addison with uncommon solicitude, and with a hope of being delighted with that fine humour which is so conspicuous in his writings; but that Addison did not talk tho' he paid it off in drinking, which he did so intemperately, that nature was obliged to throw off her load; upon which circumstance the visitor, on his departure, remarked, that no good thing had come out of his mouth that night but the wine. Let it, however, be remembered by those who bring such instances in their own justification, that the cause of Addison's taciturnity was, a natural diffidence in the company of strangers, to dismiss which he took his glass more freely than he might otherwise have done; and that, among a chosen few, his conversation was at once improving and delightful.

In some circles it is possible to be a very excellent companion without uttering a single sentiment, or a single word more than is necessary to repeat the toast. In these, indeed, the wit of a Swift, the humour of a Quin, and the fine philosophical spirit of an Addison, would not be deemed half so agreeable as the good natured ease of him who counts no hours but silently sits and inhales and exhales, through a tube of clay, the smoke of tobacco. If such persons are philosophers, one might guess from their taciturnity that they are the disciples of Pythagoras.

In the lower ranks of mankind we muſt not expect refinement. Liberal and ingenious ideas muſt have been collected by reading, before converſation can been advanced to the perfection of which it is capable. We readily therefore pardon thoſe defects which could not eaſily have be ſupplied. We are not ſurpriſed at ribaldry, noiſe, and nonſenſe, in the ſociety of the vulgar, and of thoſe who ſeek relief from bodily labour in coarſe mirth and unſelected ſociety. But that perſons who have improved their reaſon, and who have leiſure for all the refinments of intellectual pleaſure, ſhould neglect the means of ſo much advantage and ſatisfaction as might be derived from converſation properly conducted, is an additional inſtance of our folly, in diſregarding the moſt obvious means of improving our happineſs and our condition.

I know it may be ſaid, that, as relaxation is often the principal object of our mutual intercourſe, to render converſation a ſtudy and the effect of care and meditation, is to defeat its purpoſe. But let it be remembered, that the improvement in converſation which I recommend, contributes no leſs to increaſe the pleaſure than the advantage of it. I recommend no ſtiffneſs, no improper ſolemnity, or diſagreeable formality; but eaſe, elegance, politeneſs, united with ſenſe, taſte, learning, and with a communicative diſpoſition. Cards are not diſapproved in general; nothing, however light, while it is innocent, is totally prohibited; and all that I contend for is, that, where circumſtances admit, and in a proper alteration, literature, the fine arts, natural and moral philoſophy, hiſtory, and whatever exerciſes the better powers of the underſtanding, ſhould contribute to fill up the many hours which we uſually ſpend in company. Theſe things would often preclude inſipidity, ſcandal, gaming, and intemperance. Such would be their valuable effects conſidered only negatively. But they would do more, they would exalt and refine the human mind, and would prove what man ſo often boaſts without exhibiting ſufficient proofs of it that he is an animal not only ſocial, but rational.

No. CIII. ON GOODNESS OF HEART.

WHOEVER has made accurate observations on men and manners, will easily perceive, that the praise of goodness of heart is usually accompanied with an oblique insinuation of intellectual imbecillity. I believe him to be a well-meaning man, says the malignant panegyrist, and if there is any fault in him, it will be found rather in his head than in his heart. Nothing could be better contrived by a crafty and envious world, to render this amiable quality contemptible, than to represent it as the effect, or as the companion of folly.

It is indeed true, that innocence and integrity are usually accompanied with simplicity; not, however, with that sort of simplicity which is sometimes synonymous with folly; but with an amiable openness of manners, which had rather lose its objects, than obtain them by deceit; which leads the tongue boldly to speak what the heart honestly conceives. If we weigh the satisfactions of an open and upright conduct, of a clear conscience, and of that liberty which we enjoy by thinking, speaking, and acting, without mean and servile restraints, it will, I believe, be found, that this simplicity is true wisdom, and that the cunning of the worldly wise is real and egregious imprudence.

Goodness of heart, whether it be a natural or acquired goodness, is indeed, in every respect, the highest excellence. It is the only quality which can rescue human nature from the disgrace and misery of its wretched weaknesses, and its powerful tendencies to evil. It raises the poor worm, that other wise crawls on a dunghill and stings and bites his wretched companions, to an exalted place in the scale of being, and causes him to assimilate with the divine nature.

I shall exhibit to my youthful readers, whose hearts are yet susceptible of whatever bias they chuse to give them, two characters: in one of which appeared goodness of heart, and in the other, worldly wisdom or cunning, or the art of pleasing for the sake of profit. If any one should hesi-

tate in chuſing whether of the two ſhall be his model, he need not heſitate at beginning a reformation of himſelf, for he may depend upon it, that his own heart ſtands greatly in need of amendment.

Serpens (for ſuch let us ſuppoſe to be his name) has perſuaded himſelf that he ſees farther into things than the reſt of his ſpecies. He conſiders religion as prieſt-craft, morality as the invention of politicians, and taſte and literature as the amuſement of fools. His philoſophy, and all his better purſuits and ideas, are circumſcribed within limits extremely narrow. Pleaſure and intereſt are his chief good, his only objects of ſerious purſuit; and in the attainment of theſe he is not ſcrupulouſly delicate. There is, indeed, no virtue or good quality, the appearance of which he does not aſſume; becauſe while mankind are weak enough to judge and eſteem men according to moral and religious prejudices, a plauſible appearance is eſſentially neceſſary to ſucceſs in life. External decency is his higheſt aim. Sincerity or ſound principles would but retard his purpoſes. Compaſſion he never felt, and is equally a ſtranger to love and friendſhip, though he is always profeſſing them to perſons of fortune and diſtinction, whom he idolizes with religious adoration; and this is the only ſentiment which he feels, bordering upon religion.

By a life ſpent in abject ſervility, in courting a capricious world, in deceiving the credulous, in contriving ſchemes of advantage or pleaſure, and in hardening his conſcience, he has at laſt, in his fiftieth year, obtained ſome promotion, and accumulated a handſome ſum of money. But he cannot enjoy it now he is poſſeſſed of it. The ſame greedy ſelfiſhneſs which taught him to debaſe his ſoul in purſuing intereſt and private gratification, ſtill operates on his conduct, and renders him a complete miſer. Though he has long enjoyed a competency, he never had ſpirit enough to marry. He was afraid of the expence. He hates his relations, becauſe he thinks they expect his fortune at his deceaſe. He has made no real friends, though he has deceived thouſands, by profeſſing friendſhip for the eaſier accompliſhment of his dirty deſigns. All the neighbours deteſt him; and he envies every one of them who appears to be happier than

himself, which indeed they all do; for his heart is torn with malignity, with fears, anxieties, and covetousness. He bears, however, the character of a shrewd and sensible man, one who knows the world, and learned, at an early age, to make it his bubble. His advice is considered as an oracle in all pecuniary business, and no attorney would be half so much consulted, if he did not render himself almost inaccessible by the moroseness of his temper. As in his youth, he was all submission and gentleness, and perfectly skilled in the celebrated art of pleasing; so now, when the masque is no longer necessary, his natural disposition breaks out in all its horid deformity. But the misery which he occasions to all around him, falls upon himself, by the just retribution of Providence. The heart, which has been the receptacle of every vice and every meanness, is always the seat of uneasy sensation. The stupid insensibility with respect to the finer feelings, which usually characterizes that sort of shrewd men, who are celebrated in the world as men who *know things so well*, may, indeed, guard them from pungent affliction; but it is itself a curse most devoutly to be deprecated.

Simplicius was the son of parents remarkable for the piety and regularity of their lives. He received a liberal education in its most comprehensive form, and found every moral instruction which he derived from books, and from his preceptor, confirmed by example at home. All his delicate sensibilities were gradually nursed to a state of perfection by the innocence and temperance of his life; by the piety and virtue of his family, in which such respect was paid to him while a boy, that not a word that could convey a loose or improper idea was ever uttered in his presence. He married early, and obeyed the dictates of his heart in selecting a most amiable woman of beauty, sense, and temper, but of little or no fortune. The shrewd and wise men of the world laughed and pitied. Simplicius, however, had never any reason to repent. His children are his chief delight; but he loves his friends with sincere and unalterable affection; and there is no species of distress which he does not pity and relieve to the best of his power. The amiableness of his manners, and the regularity of his conduct,

gave him the advantage of character, the want of which can ſeldom be ſupplied by any worldly policy. With this powerful recommendation he has made his way to eminence, and enjoys his ſucceſs with the trueſt reliſh. It is, indeed, unembittered by any reflection of ſiniſter motives of ſecuring it. He always proceeded in the ſtraight road of common ſenſe and common honeſty. He knew of no obliquities; for, indeed, he found the art of life very plain and eaſy, and by no means ſuch as requires the precepts of a Machiavel. His heart and his underſtanding are both excellent; and, co-operating with each other, have conducted him to happineſs through the flowery paths of innocence. His heart has been a perpetual ſpring of agreeable ſenſations to himſelf, and to all who were ſo fortunate as to be allied to him by kindred, by affinity, by acquaintance, or in the courſe of his negociations. A good conſcience will cauſe the evening of life to cloſe in the ſweeteſt ſerenity, as the day has been diſtinguiſhed by unclouded ſunſhine.

Whatever the ſhort-ſighted votaries of avarice and ambition may aſſert, there is do doubt, but that real goodneſs of heart is the nobleſt ornament of human nature, and the leaſt fallible ſource of permanent ſatisfaction. I have often therefore lamented, that in the courſe of what is called a liberal education, very little attention has been paid at our beſt ſchools to the culture of the heart. While good ſeeds have been ſown in the underſtanding, the heart has been ſuffered to be over-run with weeds and briars. In truth, learning and abilities, without goodneſs of heart, conſtitute that kind of wiſdom which is fooliſhneſs in the ſight of reaſon and of God. Without goodneſs of heart, man, however accompliſhed, is ſo far from being but a little lower than the angels, that he is ſcarcely above the accurſed ſpirits, and by no means equal to many of the brutes, who often exhibit moſt amiable inſtances of a good heart in the virtues of gratitude, ſincere affection, and fidelity.

No. CIV. ON THE CHARACTERS OF THEOPHRASTUS.

IF portraits of the ancient Athenians, painted from the life by the artists of the times, had descended to the present age, they would have attracted universal notice, and have been justly considered as invaluable. The productions, however, of the pencil are not proof against the corrosions of time; but though we have no original pictures of the persons of the ancient Athenians, we have admirable sketches of their minds delineated by Theophrastus. I do not mean descriptions of heroes, philosophers, or poets. They are to be found in the writings of the historian. Theophrastus has taken his pictures from private and common life; from persons too obscure to adorn the page of history, but who constitute subjects well adapted to the purpose of him who studies the anatomy of human nature. It is, indeed, extremely curious and amusing to discover strokes of character in the citizens of Athens, who lived above two thousand years ago, exactly similar to the manners of the present day, as they appear in London, and in other parts of civilized Europe.

Theophrastus entered on the undertaking of delineating the characters of his countrymen at the age of ninety-nine; an age at which he had treasured up a multitude of ideas from converse and observation. His design was to stigmatize follies, foibles, and little vices, rather than atrocious crimes. He meant, as he informs us himself in his preface, that posterity should learn from the patterns which he should leave them, to judge of characters with accurate discrimination, and to select such persons for friendship and acquaintance as might communicate excellence equal to their own, by exciting a spirit of generous emulation.

I will transcribe a single extract for the amusement of my reader, desiring him to keep in his mind the idea, that the writer of the character, and the person characterised, lived above three hundred years before the Christian æra. It will also be proper, in order to receive all the pleasure

which the perusal of Theophrastus is capable of affording, that the reader should consider, whether many features of the character have not fallen under his own observation.

The following passage is taken from his section on the Art of Pleasing; and shews, that this boasted art, as it is now taught, is no modern discovery; but is, at all times, the genuine offspring of meanness and self-interest.

"The art of pleasing," says he, "is a kind of behaviour in the company of another, which tends, indeed, to give pleasure, but not for the best of purposes. The person who studies it, is such an one as, after having saluted a man a great way off, and called him the best man in the world, and admired him sufficiently, takes him by both his hands, and will not let him go; but accompanying him a little way, asks when he shall have the pleasure of seeing him again; nor does he take leave after all without a thousand compliments and praises. When he is called in as an arbitrator, he is not only desirous of pleasing the party on whose side he appears, but the adversary also, that he may seem to be the common friend of both. He tells a foreign gentleman, that he really speaks the language with a better accent than the natives. When he is invited to dinner, he insists upon the gentleman's letting the little children come in, and the moment he sees them, he declares, they are more like their father than one fig is like another; and taking them by the hand, he kisses them, and makes them sit next to him, and plays with them himself, saying, here is a little trinket for one, and here is a little hatchet for the other; and he lets them fall asleep on his lap, seeming to be highly delighted, though he sits on thorns all the while. He shaves his face very often; he keeps his teeth accurately clean; lays aside his clothes, even while they are good, because the fashion is changed, and takes care to be perfumed with the best perfume. In all public places he is seen talking, or sitting, with the principal persons, &c." It is not consistent with my design to fill my paper with citations, or it would be easy to produce many ancient pieces from this moral painter, which deserve to be highly esteemed on account of their age and curiosity. The paintings,

it must be owned, are rather in the Flemish style, and many of them partake of the caricatura.

But though I commend the pieces as curiosities, I would by no means be understood to praise them as perfect, or as standards for imitation. Whether they have undergone mutilation or transposition, or whether the author, in extreme old age, had not spirits to review what he wrote, it is not easy to determine: but it is certain, that there is often a total want of connection, and that many strokes are admitted not at all descriptive of the character to which they are applied. Indeed it appears probable, that the characters were real ones, and the remarks personal. So that though the author began with a general foible or folly, yet, pursuing the model from which he drew in all its parts, he was led, by an accurate delineation of the whole, to some particularities not at all connected with the predominant features of the general character described.

With respect to the style of this little book, I cannot discover any beauties so peculiarly striking as could induce Aristotle to change this author's name from Tyrtamus to that of Theophrastus. There were, however, it is probable, in his other works, some very distinguished excellencies of diction, since they procured him, from one of the best critics whom the world ever saw, a name, which signified, that he expressed himself like a god. Diogenes Laertius informs us that he wrote no fewer than two hundred and twenty books; but scarcely any of them have escaped the hand of envious time. The characters we may venture to imagine are greatly mutilated, and many of them lost. It is, indeed, supposed, that as in this treatise he has represented faults only, he wrote another, in which he has represented to the view the more amiable picture of virtuous and agreeable characters. Very high commendations are paid to his Treatise on Plants and Stones; but it is but little read, since the great improvements which have been made by the moderns in the science of botany. Upon the whole of his character, Casaubon appears to have remarked with justice, that he was worthy of that age which produced the glorious triumvirate, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle.

Many commentaries have been written to facilitate the

reading of the characters; but I cannot help thinking, that this is one of the few ancient books, in the illustration of which learning is less necessary than a knowledge of the world.

No. CV. ON SEVERAL PASSAGES IN THE ENCHIRIDION OR MANUAL OF EPICTETUS.

THERE is scarcely any of the philosophical sects which has not adopted some absurdity amidst a great variety of wise and valuable doctrines. Like all inventors and selectors of their own systems, they have been hurried to excess, and have disgraced the rational parts of their philosophy by far-fetched refinements, or by foolish tenets, which could originate only in the madness of enthusiasm. The stoical system, beautiful and noble as it is in a general view, abounds with blemishes which have almost rendered it contemptible. It may, indeed, be said, in vindication of them, that they have a tendency to raise and strengthen human nature; while the errors of many other systems tend only to indulge its passions, and to increase its infirmity.

I shall present my reader with a few extracts from the admirable Enchiridion; divesting them of the absurd doctrines, and retaining only what is really practicable and interesting to mankind at large, independently of any philosophical system. The passages are well known to the learned, to whose notice it would be superfluous to address them. They are more particularly intended for the use of the young; and of those who, from their engagements in active or commercial life, have not time for the study of Epictetus. Readers of this description will, I hope, find them not only very curious but useful specimens of heathen wisdom. I shall transcribe the few passages which the limits of my paper will admit from the translation of a lady, who has long done honour to her sex, and to English literature.

"Require not things to happen as you wish; but wish them to happen as they do happen, and you will go on well.

"Remember that you must behave in life as at an entertainment. Is any thing brought round to you? Put out

your hand and take your ſhare with moderation. Does it paſs by you? Do not ſtop it. Is it not yet come? Do not ſtretch forth your deſire towards it, but wait till it reaches you. Thus do with regard to children, to a wife, to public poſts, to riches; and you will be ſome time or other a worthy partner of the feaſts of the gods.

"Remember that you are an actor in a drama, of ſuch kind as the author pleaſes to make it. If ſhort, of a ſhort one; if long, of a long one. If it be his pleaſure you ſhould act a poor man, a cripple, a governor, or a private perſon, ſee that you act it naturally. For this is your buſineſs, to act well the character aſſigned you. To chuſe it, is another's.

"If you have an earneſt deſire of attaining to philoſophy, prepare yourſelf from the very firſt to be laughed at, to be ſneered by the multitude, to hear them ſay, "he is returned to us a philoſopher all at once," and, "whence this ſupercilious look?" Now, for your part, do not have a ſupercilious look indeed; but ſtill keep ſteadily to thoſe things which appear beſt to you, as one appointed by God to this ſtation. For remember, if you adhere to the ſame point, thoſe very perſons who at firſt ridiculed, will afterwards admire you; but if you are conquered by them, you will incur a double ridicule.

"When a neighbour's boy has had a ſlight accident, broken a cup, for inſtance, we are preſently ready to ſay "Theſe are things that will happen." Be aſſured then, that when your own cup is likewiſe broken, you ought to be affected juſt as when another's cup is broken. Transfer this in like manner to other things. Is the child or wife of another dead? There is no one who would not ſay, "This is an accident to which human nature is liable." But if any one's own child happens to die, it is preſently, "Alas, how wretched am I!" But it ſhould be remembered, how we are affected on hearing the ſame concerning others.

"If a perſon had delivered up your body to any one whom he had met in the way, you would certainly be angry. And do you feel no ſhame in delivering up your own mind to be diſconcerted and confounded by any one who happens to give you ill language?

" Duties are univerſally meaſured by relations. Is any one a father? In this are implied, as due, taking care of him, ſubmitting to him in all things, patiently receiving his reproaches, his correction. But he is a bad father. Is your natural tie then to a good father? No; but to a father. Is a brother unjuſt? Well: preſerve your own ſituation towards him; conſider not what he does, but what you are to do. In this manner you will find, from the idea of a neighbour, a citizen, a general, the correſponding duties, if you accuſtom yourſelves to contemplate the ſeveral relations.

" It is incumbent on every one to offer libations and ſacrifices conformably to the cuſtoms of his country, with purity, and not in a ſlovenly manner, nor negligently, nor beyond his ability.

" Immediately preſcribe ſome character and form of behaviour to yourſelf, which you may preſerve, both alone and in company.

" We muſt not diſcourſe on any of the common ſubjects, of gladiators, or horſe races, or athletic champions, or feaſts, the vulgar topics of converſation; but principally not of men, ſo as either to blame, or praiſe, or make compariſons. If you are able, by your own converſation, bring over that of your company to proper ſubjects; but, if you happen to be taken among perſons of ideas totally different from yours, be ſilent.

" Let not your laughter be much, nor on many occaſions, nor profuſe. Avoid ſwearing, if poſſible, altogether; if not, as far as you are able.

" Avoid public and vulgar entertainments: but, if ever an occaſion calls you to them, keep your attention upon the ſtretch, that you may not imperceptibly ſlide into vulgar manners. For be aſſured, that if a perſon be ever ſo ſound himſelf, yet if his companion be infected, he who converſes with him will be infected likewiſe.

" Before marriage preſerve yourſelf pure; but do not therefore be troubleſome, and full of reproofs, to thoſe who are licentious, nor frequently boaſt that you yourſelf are not.

" If any perſon tells you, that ſuch a perſon ſpeaks ill of you, do not make excuſes about what is ſaid of you, but

anſwer; "He does not know my other faults, elſe he would not have mentioned only theſe."

"In parties of converſation, avoid a frequent and exceſſive mention of your own actions and dangers; for, however agreeable it may be to yourſelf to mention the riſques you have run, it is not equally agreeable to others to hear your adventures. Avoid likewiſe an endeavour to excite laughter; for this is a ſlippery point, which may throw you into vulgar manners; and beſides, may be apt to leſſen you in the eſteem of your acquaintance. Approaches to indecent diſcourſe are likewiſe dangerous. Whenever, therefore, any thing of this ſort happens, if there be a proper opportunity, rebuke him who makes advances that way; or, at leaſt, by ſilence and bluſhing, and a forbidding look, ſhew yourſelf diſpleaſed by ſuch talk.

"If you are ſtruck by the appearance of any promiſed pleaſure, guard yourſelf againſt being hurried away by it; but let the affair wait your leiſure, and procure yourſelf ſome delay. Then bring to your mind both points of time; that, in which you ſhall enjoy the pleaſure, and that, in which you will repent and reproach yourſelf, after you have enjoyed it: and ſet before you, in oppoſition to theſe, how you will rejoice and applaud yourſelf, if you abſtain. And even, though it ſhould appear to you a ſeaſonable gratification, take heed, that its enticing and agreeable and atractive force may not ſubdue you; but ſet in oppoſition to this, how much better it is, to be conſcious of having gained ſo great a victory.

"When you do any thing from a clear judgment that it ought to be done, never ſhun the being ſeen to do it, even though the world ſhould make a wrong ſuppoſition about it; for if you do not act right, ſhun the action itſelf; but if you do, why are you afraid of thoſe who cenſure you wrongly?

"If you have aſſumed any character above your ſtrength, you have both made an ill figure in that, and quitted one which you might have ſupported.

"Women, from fourteen years old, are flattered with the title of miſtreſs by the men. Therefore, perceiving that they are regarded as only qualified to give the men pleaſure,

they begin to adorn themselves; and in that to place all their hopes. It is worth while, therefore, to fix our attention on making them sensible that they are esteemed for nothing else, but the appearance of a decent, and modest, and discreet behaviour.

"It is a mark of want of genius, to spend much time in things relating to the body; as to be long in our exercises, in eating and drinking. These should be done incidentally and slightly; and our whole attention be engaged in the care of the understanding.

"Never call yourself a philosopher, nor talk a great deal among the unlearned about theorems; but act conformably to them. Thus, at entertainments, do not talk how persons ought to eat; but eat as you ought. There is great danger in immediately throwing out what you have not digested. And if any one tells you, that you know nothing, and you are not nettled at it, then you may be sure that you have begun your business.

"Sheep do not produce the grass, to shew how much they have eaten; but, inwardly digesting their food, they outwardly produce wool and milk. Thus, therefore, do you likewise not shew theorems to the unlearned, but the actions produced by them, after they have been digested.

"The condition and characteristic of a vulgar person are, that he never expects either benefit or hurt from himself, but from externals. The condition and characteristic of a philosopher are, that he expects all hurt and benefit from himself.

"Whatever rules you have deliberately proposed to yourself for the conduct of life, abide by them as so many laws, and as if you would be guilty of impiety in transgressing any of them; and do not regard what any one says of you, for this, after all, is no concern of yours. How long will you defer to think yourself worthy of the noblest improvements, and in no instance to transgress the distinctions of reason? You are no longer a boy, but a grown man. If, therefore you will be negligent and slothful, and always add procrastination to procrastination, purpose to purpose, and fix day after day in which you will attend to

yourself, you will insensibly continue without proficiency; and living and dying, persevere in being one of the vulgar. This instant, then, think yourself worthy of living as a man grown up, and a proficient. Let whatever appears to be the best, be to you an inviolable law. And if any instance of pain or pleasure, or glory or disgrace, be set before you, remember that now is the combat, now the Olympiad comes on, nor can it be put off; and that, by once being worsted and giving way, proficiency is lost; or, by the contrary, preserved. Thus Socrates became perfect, improving himself by every thing, attending to nothing but reason. And, though you are not yet a Socrates, you ought, however, to live as one desirous of becoming a Socrates.

"Upon all occasions we ought to have this saying of Socrates at hand, "O Crito! if it thus pleases the gods, thus let it be! Anytus and Melitus may kill me indeed, but hurt me they cannot."

The conferences of Epictetus, from which, indeed, the manual is in great measure collected, quaint as they appear, abound with pithy remarks; such as suggest much more to the mind of a reflecting reader than meets the ear. The gold, however, as it happens in the richest mines, is surrounded with much dross. The uncouth manner in which the conferences appear in a translation, however excellent, has deterred many from perusing them, who would have found their perseverence amply rewarded. I cannot therefore help wishing, for the sake of liberal and studious young men, that all the valuable matter were extracted, and presented to their view, with accuracy; but at the same time, with all the ornaments of an elegant and flowing diction. I should indeed, think it an excellent mode of improving the minds and morals of those who are in the course of their education, if some one passage, like those cited above, were selected as a text or subject on which the preceptor might expatiate. For next to the scriptures themselves, the writings of the stoics contribute most to raise and rescue human nature from the humiliation and wretchedness into which it is prone to fall, by natural degeneracy, inherent weakness, and acquired corruption. They operate on the mind like those medicines on the body which are called bracers, or corroboratives;

and ſurely that philoſophy ought to be encouraged by every moraliſt and ſtateſman, which adds nerves to virtue and gives ſtability to empire.

No. CVI. ON SWEETNESS AND DELICACY OF STYLE.

AS there is in ſome flowers an exquiſite ſcent, and in ſome fruits a delicious flavour, to expreſs which no language has a name; ſo there is in ſtyle a ſweetneſs and a delicacy which eludes deſcription, and can only be perceived by the ſenſibility of taſte.

But though it may be difficult to analyſe this agreeable quality, or to teach a writer how to infuſe it into his works, yet it is by no means equally arduous to point out a few authors, in whom both the obſervations of others, and our own feelings, have diſcovered it. This, indeed is the only method of communicating it; and though it is not to be taught by didactic and formal precepts, it may be acquired by the contagious influence of a captivating example.

Sweetneſs is chiefly to be found in lyric poetry; but is by no means confined to it. Though Voſſius is of opinion that ſweetneſs is peculiar to lyric, as gravity to the epic, ſimplicity to the paſtoral, ſoftneſs to the elegiac, jocularity to the comic, pathos to the tragic, bitterneſs to the ſatiric, and pungency to the epigrammatic; yet I rather think that they all admit on ſome occaſions, ſomething of this captivating quality. Homer, who furniſhes models of every ſtyle, often mixes, among his ruder beauties, a delicate ſweetneſs of diction, which, beſides its own inherent power of pleaſing, embelliſhes all the rougher parts by the power of contraſt.

Theocritus is all ſweetneſs; and if a reader, with a good ear, ſhould not underſtand the bard of Syracuſe, he might ſtill be delighted with the delicious honey of the Doric dialect.

Many of the little but elegant compoſitions in the anthologiæ, owe all their excellence to the ſelection of words, which convey enchanting muſic to the ear. They ſeem,

indeed, to trickle like liquid honey from the honeycomb, and this without any affectation in the writers; for such are the peculiar beauties of the Greek language, that it is difficult to write on subjects connected with pleasure, love, and beauty, without using such expressions as, besides their real meaning, excite an idea of sweetness by their sound, similar to the object represented.

Sweetness is the peculiar excellence of the joyous bard of Teos. The bacchanalian songs of modern times partake very little of those delicate charms which distinguish a style truly Anacreontic. It does not indeed appear, that the modern bacchanals have thought it possible that their joys should admit of delicacy. The songs, therefore, which have been written to enliven and stimulate their mirth, have usually been of a coarser kind, and such as necessarily excluded sweetness of composition. They seem to have considered a Bacchus as he is rudely represented on a sign-post, and not as he is described by the poets and sculptors of antiquity, a most graceful and elegant figure. Anacreon, after all, like the Greek epigrammatists, must be acknowledged to owe much of his sweetness to a language, which cannot be otherwise than sweet on certain subjects, without unnatural violence. The Latin language, though susceptible of peculiar delicacy, is certainly less capable of sweetness than the dialect of Athens, Ionia, and Doris. But still there are many authors in it, who have derived much of the power of pleasing the human race, during near twenty centuries, from the singular sweetness of their style.

Catullus, I believe, deserves to be mentioned among the first of those who have emulated the Greeks in their distinguished excellence. Few books would have been better calculated to give boys a true taste for sweet composition, if the decency of the poet's sentiments had been equal to the delicacy of his style.

Horace was a very Proteus in the circumstances of a versatile and variegated diction. His odes abound with stanzas, and his other works with heroic verses, which evidently prove, that if he had chosen to vie with Virgil in strength and dignity, he would have approached his rival. But he was a man of pleasure, and his favourite style is that in which

he celebrates love and wine. In this there is a remarkable sweetness; and I now not whether the *curiosa felicitas*, or that charm of his writings which resulted from study and happiness united, may not be said to consist in sweetness and delicacy. Such is the delightful sweetness of the ninth ode of the fourth book, and the fourth of the third, that all readers have been charmed with them; and Julius Scaliger, a very warm critic, has asserted, that he had rather be the author of them than of all Pindar's odes, or than be elevated to the rank of a monarch. It is I think certain, that many of the odes of Horace, and many of the works of other poets of equal fame, have delighted mankind from one generation to another, far less by their sentiments than by those congenial beauties, a sweetness of language, a delicate choice of words, and a well modulated collocation.

The modest bard of Mantua indisputably owes his influence over the human mind to his talent in attempering, in a most judicious union, softness, sweetness, and the nicest delicacy, with the most majestic grandeur.

Among the prose writers of Greece and Rome, every reader of taste will immediately observe, that Herodotus and Xenophon, Cæsar and Cicero, claim the first place in the excellence of a sweet style. The two Plinies and Paterculus have a considerable share of it. Thucydides, Sallust, and Tacitus are too fond of austerity to admit any great portion of sweetness.

Many of the modern Latin poets have distinguished themselves by the sweetness of their verse. Some of them have, however, carried it to excess, and have written in the worst manner of Grotius, Johannes Secundus, and Bonifonius. Sweetness ought to be distinguished from luscious-ness; the one affects us with the sensations durably agreeable; the other quickly cloys and palls the appetite.

The eminent French writers who certainly possess taste, have displayed a remarkable sweetness of style. The Italians can scarcely compose without displaying it. He who has formed a taste for this quality, will find it fully gratified in the writings of Fontaine, Metastasio, and, indeed, in all the celebrated authors of France and Italy. Those nations, in modern times, have been more defective in strength

and nerve, than in any of the ſofter qualities, the purpoſe of which is to pleaſe.

Though the French are diſpoſed to deny the Engliſh the praiſe of taſte I cannot help thinking, that we have writers who can rival them in their pretenſions to every excellence which can adorn compoſition. Our Addiſon, like ſome of the moſt celebrated ancients, poſſeſſes that ſweetneſs, that delicacy, and that grace which is formed to pleaſe the human mind, under all the revolutions of time, of faſhion, and of a capricious taſte. It is not only the excellent matter which produces the effect of gently compoſing our paſſions while we are reading Addiſon; but it is alſo that ſweet ſtyle, which cannot be read and taſted without communicating to the mind ſomething of its own equability. Sir William Temple was, indeed, the model of Addiſon, and he is remarkable for the ſweetneſs of his ſtyle, eſpecially if he is compared with the writers of his own time.

All our eminent poets have judiciouſly mingled ſweetneſs with ſtrength, and grace with dignity. Waller has uſually obtained the praiſe of ſweetneſs; but he has been greatly exceeded by his ſucceſſors in this and every other ſpecies of poetry. If that ſort of genius which conſtitutes a Homer, a Shakeſpeare, a Milton, has not been common among us; yet the ſubordinate ſpecies, which is diſplayed in elegant mediocrity, and in what we call pretty and pleaſing opuſcula, has no where more abounded.

It appears to me that the latter writers of proſe have rather affected the maſculine and nervous, than the ſweet and graceful. The late Mr. Harris is, indeed, an exception; for he collected the pureſt honey from the flowers of Attica. The author of Fitzoſborne's Letters has exhibited both grace and ſweetneſs: and I wiſh they were not ſometimes injured by verboſity. Johnſon, Hawkeſworth, Robertſon, are chiefly admired for ſtrength and force. Hume has now and then diſplayed ſomething of Addiſonian ſweetneſs in a few of his moral eſſays. It is to be wiſhed he had diſplayed alſo ſomething of the Addiſonian goodneſs of heart. The Warburtonian ſchool, as Hume called it, though it has produced ingenious and nervous writers, can not boaſt either of ſweetneſs or gracefulneſs. It has delighted much in violent controverſy and arbitrary dictation, both

of which usually bid defiance to the Graces, and prefer bitterness and acrimony to sweetness.

Though it may not be easy to define the whole of that, whatever it is, which constitutes sweetness of style, yet it is by no means difficult to discover one or two circumstances which are highly conducive to it. It is, indeed, obvious to observe, that the frequent use of liquid letters, and of labials combined with syllables consisting of vowels with few consonants, contributes greatly to sweeten the diction. But so nice a point is real excellence, that the smallest excess or affectation of any particular beauty will totally destroy all its agreeable effect. It must result from nature, cultivated indeed, but not too closely confined and directed by art. Alliteration is conducive to sweetness and is a figure frequently used by the best writers, ancient and modern. Used with caution it cannot fail to please; but the cause of the pleasure should be latent. When this figure obtrudes itself too often, and in excess, as it does in several modern writers, it loses all its grace, and the reader resents and loaths the paltry artifice of a writer who depends on so poor a claim to applause. This, indeed, and all other ornaments, are to be used, as it has been observed, like salt at a meal, which agreeably seasons every dish when mixed in moderation, but which would spoil the whole if it were rendered the predominant ingredient in the repast.

No. CVII. HINTS TO THOSE WHO ARE DESIGNED FOR THE PROFESSION OF PHYSIC.

IT was always a part of my design, in these papers, to suggest a few hints of advice to young persons who are just entering on any of the liberal professions; not, indeed, with a presumptuous intention to direct them in a technical or scientific practice, but merely to give them some general ideas, which may render their views more liberal, and their minds more generous, or arm them with some useful precautions. I remember too well the impertinence of the sophist who read a lecture to Hannibal on the art of war, to think of instructing any persons in the peculiar art and science, which they have made the study of their lives. But

there are certain universal truths which men attached to a particular pursuit sometimes overlook. There is also a certain enlargement of mind which is lost in the narrow habits and confined views of those who take an active part in a lucrative profession. He who surveys life in an extensive prospect, may see a variety of magnificent objects which escape the eye, that is constantly fixed on a few single circumstances, and confined within a narrow circle. It is the business of the moralist to inspect every part of human life, to endeavour to correct its errors, and promote all the excellence and happiness of which it is capable.

It has been justly remarked, that they who enter on the profession of medicine in any of its branches, have too often depended for success, rather on the cultivation of the graces than the sciences. And it is certain, that many persons whose solid attainments were very moderate, have run away with the greatest share of wealth and popularity, with few other recommendations than a fine person, a shewy dress, a singular equipage, and an undaunted effrontery,

But since internal satisfaction, a consciousness of having done all that was possible to prepare for a profession, and of having pretended to no more than we are able to perform, is a surer source of happiness than the applause, and even the genius of the ignorant multitude; I advise every pupil who values substantial happiness more than the phantom of it, to devote the first period of his life to a very serious pursuit of every part of knowledge which contributes to give him, not only a practical but a theoretical skill in his profession: not only the contracted ideas of a mercenary practitioner, but the comprehensive sentiments of a student in philosophy.

The foundation should be laid in an education truly liberal. It is really lamentable to observe the extreme ignorance of those among medicial practitioners, who are applied to in the first instance, and who constitute the most numerous class. They are taken from a writing school, or perhaps a grammar school, at the age of fourteen, and bound apprentices. They have usually acquired a good handwriting; but their knowledge of the classics is seldom worth mentioning; and, upon the whole, their education may be

faid to be about equal to that of a pauper in a pariſh charity ſchool. Their buſineſs is to ſtand behind a counter, and compound medicines by the preſcriptions of the doctor. Theſe are uſually in Latin, written very badly, and full of affected abbreviations. They are, indeed, often ſo ænigmatical, that nothing leſs than the ſagacity of an Oedipus can reſolve their difficulties. The poor lad, if he has time, will toil at his dictionary, where, however, he often toils in vain; but if he has not time, which is uſually the caſe, he takes the moſt expeditious method of doing buſineſs. He is aſhamed to confeſs his ignorance, and therefore puts up any medicine which his conjecture ſuggeſts; the phial is wrapt in its paper, diſpatched with all expedition, and the patient poiſoned.

After having ſpent ſeven years in a ſhop pounding drugs and ſpreading plaſters; and after having acquired a little paltry portion of mechanical knowledge by conſtant habit, he is diſmiſſed as complete; and goes into the country a bold profeſſor of chirurgery and pharmacy. With a ſmart dreſs, and unbluſhing countenance, and a voluble tongue, he is ſure of ſucceſs, and bids defiance to all the learning in the world. In his own opinion he is another Hippocrates or Heberden: and, indeed, he is an object of real wonder to the country people; for he collects a few hard words from his dictionary, which he utters with great gravity among goſſips and farmers, who conſider him as a very learned man, as well as prodigiouſly clever in his profeſſion. Thoſe who could bear witneſs againſt his ſkill, are all ſecured and ſilenced in the church-yard.

I aſſert, that a knowledge of Greek as well as Latin is really neceſſary to the apothecary, if he would perform his buſineſs with that accuracy which is certainly required in ſo important an employment. A boy deſtined to this employment ſhould by no means leave his ſchool till the age of ſixteen or ſeventeen. The knowledge of the learned languages acquired before that time is merely elementary; it is only of uſe as it leads to farther improvement in the languages. It cannot qualify for any profeſſion, much leſs for the apothecary's the names of whoſe inſtruments, medicines, and operations, are, for the moſt part, either wholly Greek, or of Greek extraction.

But, indeed, if he wiſhes to raiſe his profeſſion above the level of an empiric or a farrier, he ſhould acquire a liberal education for its own ſake, independently of its uſe in a mercenary view; for the ſake of poliſhing his mind, and elevating his ſentiments. With a liberal education and an extenſive practice, he is in fact a phyſician, though called an apothecary; and though he ſhould neither have purchaſed a diploma, nor have earned a regular degree by ſpending his time, money, and health in an Engliſh univerſity, he is a medical Gentleman, though not a doctor: and the peculiar utility of his employments, when judiciouſly and humanely conducted, entitles him to the company and converſation of all who deſerve that diſtinction.

There never was an age in which they who intend to ſupport the dignified character of graduated phyſicians had better opportunities for improvement in phyſiology. Lectures, as well as books, in anatomy, chemiſtry, and every part of ſcience and natural philoſophy, never more abounded. Let the ſtudent devote himſelf to theſe with long and ſerious application, and depend more upon them, than on the caprice of faſhion, or any ſingularity in his chariot or livery. A popular phyſician in a great capital, and indeed any where, is a very important member of ſociety, conſidered, merely in a political view. The lives, limbs, health, and ſpirits of a very great part of the ſubjects of a kingdom depend upon his ſkill and honeſty. A man who undertakes this office, and recommends himſelf by addreſs and artifice, without qualiying himſelf with every preparatory knowledge, and who abuſes the confidence of thoſe who fly to him as to a guardian angel, in the deepeſt diſtreſs, has very little claim to the title of an honeſt man, and deſerves to be ſtigmatized and puniſhed with the worſt of villains, and the vileſt of ſharpers.

It has been obſerved and regretted, that ſome individuals in this liberal profeſſion have exhibited ſuch an attention to intereſt, as is incompatible with the common feelings of humanity. Such perſons are their own enemies; for no gratification of ſordid avarice can equal the delicious ſenſations of him, who delights in exerciſing his ſkill, in diffuſing joy through the haunts of miſery, and in relieving the ſick, the maimed, the halt, and the blind.

There is, indeed, something god-like in the medical profession, when it is humanely and disinterestedly exercised. Every one, it is true, ought to pay that regard to interest which prudence, and a love of his own family, demand; but he who also delights in relieving, from the satisfactions of sympathy and a sense of duty, may be said to resemble the great model of every perfection, Jesus Christ, who went about doing good, and healing all manner of sickness and diseases among the people.

No. CVIII. THE COMPLAINTS AGAINST MODERN LITERATURE PROBABLY ILL-FOUNDED.

TO complain of the present, and to praise the past, has so long been the favourite topic of disappointment, or of ignorance, that every stricture on the degeneracy of the times is looked upon as the effusion of ill-nature, or the result of superficial observation: but the absurdity of declamatory invective, ought not to preclude the cool remarks of truth, reason, and experience.

The practice of vice, or virtue, has indeed varied at different periods, rather in the mode, than in the degree; but the state of literature has suffered more violent revolutions; it has sometimes shone with the brightest lustre; and at others has been totally overshadowed with the darkness of barbarism.

To review the state of learning from the earliest periods, and to investigate the causes of its fluctuation, is a task that requires much labour, sagacity and erudition. More superficial enquiries will, however, suffice to examine the justice of the charge of literary degeneracy in the present age, and, if it be well founded, to discover the causes of it.

It has been observed by an ingenious writer, that as every age has been marked by some peculiarity, from which it has derived its characteristic appellation; so the present, were it to be distinguished by a name from its most prevalent humour, might be called *the age of authors*. Of late years, almost every man has felt an ambition of appearing in print,

from the voluminous lexicographer, down to the ſcribbler in a pamphlet or a news-paper. It is, indeed, natural to ſuppoſe, that of a great number of competitors, ſome would reach the prize; and that the univerſal combination of intellects would effect ſome ſtupendous work, which ſhould exceed all the productions of our predeceſſors, and demand the admiration of the lateſt poſterity. It has, however, been obſerved, that the learning of the preſent age is not deep, though diffuſive; and that its productions are not excellent, though numerous.

The multiplicity of compoſitions is an argument of their haſty production; and haſtineſs is at leaſt a preſumptive proof of their want of merit. In this point, the literary and the natural world reſemble each other. The productions of nature, whether vegetable or animal, as they are either of a ſlow or ſpeedy growth, are known to be durable or tranſitory, ſolid or unſubſtantial. The oak and the elephant are long before they attain perfection, but are ſtill longer before they decay: while the butterfly and the tulip periſh as they ariſe, almoſt within the diurnal revolution of the ſun. The works of Virgil coſt him much time and labour; but they have exiſted near two thouſand years univerſally admired, while the compoſitions of that poet, who boaſted he could write two or three hundred verſes while he ſtood on one leg, were loſt in a ſpace almoſt as ſhort as that in which they were produced.

But the haſty formation of literary works in modern times, is not a greater obſtacle to their excellence, than the mercenary motives of their authors. The office of inſtructing mankind in morality, and of informing them in ſcience, was once reſerved for thoſe alone who were particularly adapted to the taſk by the impulſes of genius, by peculiar opportunities, and by ſingular application. In theſe times, however, the profeſſion of an author is become a lucrative employment, and is practiſed rather by thoſe who feel the inconvenience of hunger, than by thoſe who are ſtimulated with the hope of immortality. But it is a known truth, that avarice contracts the mind, and renders it incapable of elevated ſentiments and generous enterprizes. It ceaſes therefore to be matter of wonder, that works are deſtitute of

ſpirit, when they proceed not from the noble ardour inſpired by the love of fame, but from the frigid incitements of the love of money.

The depraved taſte of readers is another cauſe of the degeneracy of writers. They who write for the public muſt gratify the taſte of the public. In vain are their compoſitions formed on the model of the beſt writers, and regulated by the precepts of the moſt judicious critics, if they conform not to the popular caprice, and the miſtaken judgment of the vulgar. In an age when the taſte for reading is univerſal, many works contemptible both in deſign and execution, will be received by ſome readers with diſtinguiſhed applauſe. The want of the merit of juſt reaſoning and pure language is, with the greater part, the half-learned and the ignorant, no objection. In truth, unconnected thoughts, and ſuperficial declamation, are congenial to minds unaccuſtomed to accurate thinking, and inſenſible of the charms of finiſhed excellence. Hence writers of acknowledged abilities and learning have been known, when they aimed at popularity, to relinquiſh real excellence, and adopt a falſe taſte in oppoſition to their own judgment.

After all, it may not perhaps be abſurd, to attribute many of the complaints againſt the preſent ſtate of letters to ignorance, envy, and caprice. In every department of literature, in the gay regions of fancy, and in the depths of philoſophy and ſcience, many authors there are of this age and nation, who have acquired an illuſtrious reputation by deſerving it: and if they want that originality of thought and ſolidity of learning which mark ſome of the productions of our firſt writers, who had the advantage of coming firſt to the harveſt, yet have they a force, elegance, and correctneſs of ſtyle, unknown to their predeceſſors.

No. CIX. ON THE CAUSES AND FOLLY OF DISSENTIONS IN A COUNTRY NEIGHBOURHOOD.

IT seems extraordinary, that with all our pretensions to the social affections and to christianity, there are few country towns or villages, in which the families, which are reckoned genteel by the right of fortune and of self-estimation, live upon terms of cordial and sincere friendship. One might, I believe, venture to go farther, and to assert, that there are few where a general enmity and dislike do not lurk, under the formality of ceremonious visits and civil salutation.

The foundation of all the uneasiness is a foolish pride, which, though it was not made for so weak a creature as man, yet adheres so closely to him, that he can seldom divest himself of it, without such an effort as few minds are able to make. Philosophy is vainly applied; for few are prouder than philosophers. Religion only can effectually eradicate a vice so deeply rooted; that amiable religion, which teaches us to love our neighbours as ourselves; and which has informed us of a truth which experience abundantly confirms, that from pride only cometh contention.

The most trifling distinction or appearance of superiority, is sure to excite all the heart-burnings of secret envy and jealousy. Instead of rejoicing at any fortunate event which contributes to the happiness of a neighbour, the greater part secretly repine at it, and endeavour to lessen the satisfaction it might afford, by disseminating some mortifying surmise or insinuation. Indeed, the fortunate person sometimes deserves some humiliation; for as his neighbours are endeavouring to lower him to their own level, he, on the other hand, ostentatiously displays his superiority, and labours to depress them below their due rank, that his own elevation may be more conspicuous. It would be entertaining to behold the little contrivances which the petty gentry invent for the purpose of eclipsing each other, if there were not always something of a malignity which dis-

guſts and hurts the mind of an humane man. The rivalry is by no means of an amicable ſort; and though the parties are wonderfully civil when they meet, they often hate each other with the greateſt inveteracy. Nothing would, indeed, give them greater pleaſure, than to hear of each other's loſſes or ruin, though they would not fail to viſit on the occaſion, and to ſympathiſe in the politeſt and moſt approved faſhion.

Scandal, indeed, who has long reigned with arbitrary ſway in country towns, is uſually the cauſe of all that latent hatred which poiſons the happineſs of families whoſe birth or fortune has placed them in the ſame neighbourhood; and who, enjoying plenty, might alſo enjoy peace, if they could prevail upon themſelves to turn a deaf ear to the tale-bearer. But ſuch is the perverſeneſs or malignity of many, that though they have themſelves but juſt ſuffered from the falſe reports of ſlanderers, they liſten, with delight, to the next whiſper, that flies, like the arrow in the dark, and wounds a neighbour's reputation. If any favourable report begins to prevail, it is with difficulty admitted; it is doubted, contradicted, or extenuated. But there is no lie ſo improbably falſe, ſo little like the truth, but it will be joyfully received and believed without examination, ſo long as it tends to lower an object of envy in the eſteem of a neighbourhood, to injure the intereſt of a rival in vanity, or to wound the heart of him whom we hate, only becauſe we feel the weight of his ſuperiority.

It is to be wiſhed, that people would conſider from how contemptible a ſource moſt of thoſe calumnies originate, which induce neighbours to entertain a bad opinion of each other, and, in conſequence, to live in a ſtate of conſtant, though ſecret enmity. They uſually come from domeſtic ſervants, who in revenge for a juſt reprimand, or from the wickedneſs of an ungrateful heart, delight in diſſeminating the moſt cruel tales without the ſmalleſt foundation in reality. Or, ſuppoſing ſomething ſimilar to the calumny did happen in a neighbour's houſe, it is ſo diſguiſed, altered, and exaggerated, by the time it has gone from the top of the town to the bottom, that what was in truth no more than a trifle ſcarcely worth attention, becomes a charge of

the moſt atrocious and injurious kind, when it has been toſſed from tongue to tongue. The vileſt menial ſhall utter a lie, in the meaneſt ſhop of the moſt paltry town; and, in the ſpace of half an hour, it ſhall be republiſhed with additions and embelliſhments, as a known fact, by the Lady of the Manor.

The petty offices and diſtinctions of churchwardens, ſurveyors, mayors, lords of the manor, commiſſioners of turnpike roads, and ſimilar rural dignities, do indeed often fill their poſſeſſors, and their ladies, with ſo high a ſenſe of their own importance, and at the ſame time excite ſo much envy in the little minds which aſpire at ſuch honours, that in proportion as the great perſonage advances in the path of glory, he is often obliged to relinquiſh the comforts of good neighbourhood. It is not indeed to be wondered at, if thoſe who have had little or no education, and whoſe views have been confined to horſes, dogs, and the affairs of a veſtry and a court-leet, ſhould value themſelves too much on petty diſtinction; and ſhould ſuppoſe the title of Eſquire, Lord of the Manor, or Juſtice of Peace, ſuch honours as may juſtify them in treating others with contumely. Neither is it wonderful, that they who have never wandered beyond the limits of their native pariſh, ſhould ſurvey ſuch diſtinctions with an envious eye. All men ought, indeed, to aſpire at diſtinction, as it may lead them to aſpire at uſefulneſs and virtue; but it is certainly deſirable, for the ſake of tranquillity, that envy and malice ſhould not be mixed with laudable emulation.

But there are other cauſes beſides the love of ſcandal and the gratification of vanity, which powerfully operate in interrupting the harmony of a good neighbourhood. Avarice is the occaſion of many and indeterminable diſagreements. In what part of the country can we fix our reſidence, where ſome of the clergy are not objects of diſlike, becauſe a regard to their wives and children, whoſe bread depends upon their lives, induces them to inſiſt on thoſe dues which the laws have allowed them? The clergyman in the moſt deſert parts of the country, is uſually a man of learning, and of a polite mind, who might diffuſe a taſte for elegant and improving converſation; but he is excluded

from the ſociety of his pariſhioners, becauſe he makes a juſt claim upon their property. The moſt ſhocking calumnies are propagated againſt him and his family; every thing is done which can mortify and diſtreſs him, and he is frequently involved for life by the farmers, and a pettifogger at their head, in vexatious and expenſive litigation. He who preaches peace, and who might ſoften, by the influence of poliſhed manners, the remains of brutality among his ſavage and narrow-minded neighbours is hunted by them till he is forced to take refuge in the lonely retreat of his parſonage.

The various meetings which are neceſſary to conduct pariſh and other public buſineſs in the country, are often productive of violent animoſities. An oppoſition formed at a veſtry, or a turnpike-meeting, is ſometimes carried on with more acrimony than in the Houſe of Commons. It would not be ſo lamentable, if the conſequences of the diſpute terminated at the time and place in which it aroſe; but it uſually happens, that if the gentlemen have diſagreed in the veſtry, the ladies, at the next tea-drinking, put on ſullen looks, and commence a ſecret attack on each other's perſons, dreſs character, and conduct. Hoſtilities, which owe their riſe to a difference of opinion concerning the mending of a road or the repairing of a ſteeple, are carried on under the cover of external civility, and continue from generation to generation.

It would be a very valuable point gained, if we could prevail on many thouſands, who, with all the external means of happineſs, lead uncomfortable lives from the diſſenſions of their neighbourhood, to conſider duly of the importance of a friendly intercourſe with thoſe in whoſe vicinity they have been placed by Providence. They may be confidently aſſured, that no pleaſure ariſing from ſcandal, from petty diſtinctions, from trifling matters of intereſt, or from influence over pariſh or country meetings, can be compared to the ſatisfaction of living in love, and in a conſtant interchange of thoſe good offices which alleviate adverſity and give to proſperity its ſweeteſt enjoyments. The qualities indiſpenſably neceſſary to the accompliſhment of this deſirable purpoſe, are benevolence and humility.

No. CX. THE IMPRUDENCE OF AN EARLY ATTACHMENT TO ACTING PLAYS. IN A LETTER

AS I was fauntering, a few days ago, on one of the public walks, I could not help particularly remarking a young man, whofe drefs fhewed marks of a fhabby gentility, and whofe countenance wore the afpect of a fettled melancholy.

The appearance of a wretchednefs, in whatever fituation, is always fufficient to awaken my curiofity. I felt myfelf irrefiftibly impelled to enquire into the hiftory of a perfon who feemed to be completely miferable. After having walked a conſiderable time, I obſerved him to throw himſelf, in a diſconſolate attitude, on one of the ſeats of the walk. I did not neglect the opportunity; but ſeating myſelf by his ſide, prevailed on him, after ſome introductory converſation, to give me his hiſtory, which he did in the following words:

"Yes, Sir," ſaid he, "though my preſent appearance "may ſeem to invalidate my aſſertion, I aſſure you I was the "ſon of one of the moſt opulent traders in the metropolis. "I might at this time have been enjoying all the happineſs "that affluence can beſtow; but now, alas! I have no "where to lay my head, no refuge to which I can fly "for comfort. I am abandoned to the wide world without "a friend; and one conſideration aggravates all my miſe"ry, I have deſerved my ſufferings, and cannot juſtly "complain."

Here he pauſed, to conceal a tear which was juſt burſting from his eyes. After he had a little recovered himſelf, his countenance gradually grew more ſerene, and he proceeded with leſs emotion.

"When I was at the age of eleven, my father placed "me at a celebrated grammar-ſchool—there I ſpent the "happieſt days of my life. Nature, as I was told, had "given me parts; I made a rapid progreſs in claſſical learn"ing; all was encouragement, all was hope, and all was

" happineſs. But, in the midſt of my improvement, my " father reſolved, in oppoſition to the advice of my maſter, " to remove me from ſchool, and to ſettle me in his own " counting-houſe. My maſter urged, that though I might " perhaps ſucceed in a learned profeſſion, yet the vivacity " of my diſpoſition would be an obſtacle to my proſperity " in a mercantile employment. My father, ſenſible of the " lucrative advantages of an eſtabliſhed trade, was deaf " to theſe remonſtrances, and on a fatal day I entered into " engagements to plod at the deſk and the counter for ſeven " years.

" But nature is not to be conſtrained by indentures. In- " ſtead of caſting up ſums, and meaſuring ells, I employed " my time in the peruſal of Shakeſpear, in compoſing epi- " logues and farces, and in diſcuſſing the merits of every " new dramatic production. Inſtead of ſpending my even- " ings in poſting accounts, and examining my ledger, I " was always attending the performances of a Foote or a " Garrick. At length, by conſtantly frequenting the " playhouſes, and mixing with contemptible ſciolifts, who " called themſelves theatrical critics, I became ſo ena- " moured of the ſtage, as to look upon dramatic entertain- " ments as conſtituting the moſt important buſineſs, as well " as the moſt agreeable enjoyment of human life. The ſhop " continually reſounded with my rants, in imitation of ſome " favourite actor; and I went ſo far as to treat with the " purchaſers of a yard of Iriſh linen, with a theatrical tone " and a dramatic action.

" I had ſo great an opinion of my own talents, that, " like the immortal Shakeſpeare, I was ambitious of ſhin- " ing both as an actor and a writer. Accordingly I finiſh- " ed a comedy with great care and pains, and preſented " it to one of the managers, who returned it upon my hands " with evident marks of contempt. By no means deject- " ed, I was reſolved to try my ſucceſs as an actor. But " having, with great difficulty, obtained permiſſion to " ſpeak before the managers, and a circle of their friends, " who ſeemed to enjoy my diſtreſs, I was again rejected.

" Though I could not ſucceed at the theatres, I was re- " ſolved to exert my abilities at ſpouting and diſputing

" clubs. And here, indeed, I eaſily made a conſpicuous " figure; as I had the advantage of a claſſical education, " and moſt of my competitors had no education at all. The " moſt imporant topics of religion, learning, and politics I " diſcuſſed with more volubility than the graveſt prelate, " the profoundeſt academic, or the craftieſt ſtateſman. But " I triumphed, as if it were, without an enemy, and the " facility of the conqueſt diminiſhed the pleaſure of it. I " ſoon became weary of dry argumentation, and eagerly " panted to wear the buſkin, and to mouth the ſonorous pe- " riods of ſome tragic bard.

" It happened that I had formed a connection with a " young member of the club, whoſe genius was entirely ſi- " milar to my own, and who had been engaged with a ſtrol- " ling company of players. He had often ſolicited me to " go with him on an acting tour into the north of England, " and I had as often refuſed from a principle of pride. But " at length, an ardent deſire of exhibiting on a ſtage, over- " came every regard to duty, and every compunction of " conſcience. In a fatal hour (I bluſh to mention it), I " embezzled a ſum of money with which I was truſted in " the courſe of buſineſs, packed up my cloaths, and accom- " panied a ſet of vagabonds, who, like myſelf, had abandon- " ed every reputable occupation, and devoted themſelves to " infamy and indigence, for the ſake of enjoying the plau- " dits of a few ruſtics aſſembled in a barn.

" And now commences the æra of all my miſery. The " money I had fraudulently taken was ſoon ſquandered " away in a ſociety of thoughtleſs mortals, who regarded " not to-morrow, if they could feaſt to day. We were, in- " deed, received with applauſe; but the audience was com- " monly ſo ſcanty, that the expences of repreſentation of- " ten exceeded the receipts. In every town we were look- " ed upon with ſuſpicion, and treated as vagrants. We " were ſometimes reduced to ſuch extremities, by the ex- " pences of travelling, and the loſſes of acting to empty " barns, that we have wanted even food to ſupport nature. " Above charity, we could not be relieved, and deſtitute " of credit, we could not be truſted. At length I ſaw " my folly, and after various reſolves ſent to a friend to en-

" quire whether my father was disposed to receive me, " should I return and confess my fault. How, alas! was " I struck, when I was told in answer, that my father died " a few days ago of a broken heart; and that his death " was so sudden, that he had not time to alter his will, in " which, in the first rage after his discovery of my elope- " ment, he had cut me off with a shilling.

" It is impossible to give you an adequate idea of my " grief on this occasion, and I shall only inform you, that it " would have proved fatal, had it not have been soon re- " moved by emotions of a different kind. During my in- " disposition, one of the actresses of our company, whose " beauty is only exceeded by the goodness of her heart, " watched me with all the anxiety of a parent, and soothed " me under the horrors of despair, with the softest blandish- " ments of tenderness. I soon felt a flame kindling in my " breast, which was answered with a sympathetic passion. " In short, I was no sooner restored to health and vigour, " than I married the lovely Emily: we have now been " united near a year, and yesterday she was safely delivered " of twins. That she is well, thank Heaven; but, alas! " the reflection that I am destitute of all the means that " can give her ease, or provide for her offspring, sharpens " all the darts of ill fortune, and embitters every woe."

Here he stopped, and I was obliged to leave him, after having given him an invitation to my house, where I hope to be able to alleviate his misfortunes, without hurting his sensibility. But I cannot help expressing my wish, that all who, deluded by a heated imagination, feel themselves inclined to quit the comforts or a parent and a home, in pursuit of a profession which is prohibited by law, and which often entails on its followers misery and disgrace, may avoid his wretchedness by avoiding his conduct.

No. CXI. ON THE PLEASURES OF REFLECTION.

THAT the enjoyments of the understanding exceed the pleasures of sense, is a truth confessed by all who are capable of exerting the faculties of thinking in their

full vigour. But by theſe pleaſures are generally underſtood ſublime contemplations on ſubjects of ſcience and abſtruſe diſquiſition; contemplations, which can only be the reſult of uncommon powers and extraordinary efforts.

But there are intellectual pleaſures of another kind; to the enjoyment of which, neither great abilities nor learning are required. Theſe are no other than the pleaſures of reflection, which are open to the illiterate mechanic, as well as to the ſage philoſopher, and conſtitute ſome of the ſweeteſt ſatisfactions of human life.

There are few who have not felt pleaſing ſenſations ariſing from a retroſpective view of the firſt period of their lives. To recollect the puerile amuſements, the petty anxieties, and the eager purſuits of childhood, is a taſk in which all delight. It is common to obſerve, that on no ſubject do men dwell with ſuch pleaſures, as the boyiſh tricks and wanton pranks which they practiſed at ſchool. The hoary head looks back with a ſmile of complacency, mixed with regret, on the ſeaſon when health glowed on the cheek, when lively ſpirits warmed the heart, and when toil ſtrung the nerves with vigour.

Cicero has remarked, that events the moſt diſagreeable, during their immediate influence, give an exquiſite ſatisfaction when their conſequences have ceaſed; and Æneas ſolaces his companions, under the hardſhips they endured, with the conſideration, that the remembrance of their ſufferings would one day give them ſatisfaction. That theſe ſentiments are juſt, is well known to thoſe who have enjoyed the converſation of the ſoldier. Battles, ſkirmiſhes, and ſieges, at which, perhaps, he trembled during the action, furniſh him with topics of converſation, and ſources of pleaſure, for the remainder of his life.

Reflection is the propereſt employment, and the ſweeteſt ſatisfaction, in a rational old age. Deſtitute of ſtrength and vigour neceſſary for bodily exertions, and furniſhed with obſervations by experience, the old man finds his greateſt pleaſure to conſiſt in wandering in imagination over paſt ſcenes of delight, in recounting the adventures of his youth, the viciſſitudes of human life, and the public events to which he is proud of having been an eye-witneſs. Of ſo exalted a

nature are theſe enjoyments, that theologiſts have not heſitated to aſſert, that to recollect a well-ſpent life, is to anticipate the bliſs of a future exiſtence.

The profeſſors of philoſophy, who will be acknowledged to have underſtood the nature of true and ſubſtantial pleaſure better than the buſy, the gay, and the diſſipated, have ever ſhewn a predilection for privacy and ſolitude. No other cauſe have they aſſigned for their conduct in forſaking ſociety, than that the noiſe and hurry of the world is incompatible with the exertion of calm reaſon and diſpaſſionate reflection. The apophthegm of that ancient who ſaid, "he was never leſs alone than when by himſelf," is not to be conſidered merely as an epigrammatic turn. In vain was it to purſue philoſophy in the Suburra; ſhe was only to be courted with ſucceſs, in the ſequeſtered ſhade of rural retirement.

Were the powers of reflection by habit, mankind would at all times be able to derive a pleaſure from their own breaſts, as rational as it is exalted. To the attainment of this happineſs, a ſtrict adherence to the rules of virtue is neceſſary; for let it be remembered, that none can feel the pleaſures of reflection, who do not enjoy the peace of innocence.

No. CXII. HINTS TO THOSE WHO ARE DESIGNED FOR THE PROFESSION OF THE LAW.

THERE is no order in the community more contemptible than that of thoſe practitioners in the law, who, without one liberal principle of juſtice or equity, poſſeſs a ſkill in little elſe but quibbles, and in thoſe points by which villany is taught to proceed with impunity, cunning enabled to elude the ſpirit by miſrepreſenting the letter, and truth perplexed, obſcured, and loſt, in the mazes of chicanery. It is indeed ſurpriſing, that many who call themſelves men of honour, and who profeſs to have had a liberal education, ſhould allow themſelves, in the practice of their profeſſion, to aſſert palpable falſehood in order to confound the

clearest evidence; and defend, with all the appearance of sincere conviction, what they know to be indefensible. It is not an admissible apology to assert, that their profession requires such an abasement; for a similar justification might be offered by the sharper or the highwayman. There are, undoubtedly, certain laws of honour and truth established in the heart of every honest man, of which no regard for lucre, and no jesuitical pretence of professional necessity, can justify the infringement.

There seems, indeed, to be a very unfortunate error in many among the students of the law, who value abilities and technical knowledge at a high rate, but entertain no great esteem for goodness of heart and integrity of conduct. While the world allows them abilities and knowledge, they depend with security on success, though they should be notoriously mercenary in public, and debauched in private life. Indeed, they have had examples to prove, that however bad the morals of the man, if the impudence and eloquence of the lawyer are approved, he may have what briefs he pleases, and be advanced to the highest dignity. An infamous character, blasted with imputations of the most atrocious kind in the walks of private and domestic life, may be introduced, by his known effrontery, and his supposed abilities, to that dignified seat, where law is to be corrected by equity, and where the conscience of the judge is the chief controul.

Whatever be the abilities of a man, yet if he be notoriously irregular and intemperate in the violation of those laws which are prior to all human laws, he ought not to be promoted to any offices of trust and honour, particularly those of a judge. If the governing part of a nation were sincere in its profession of a belief in the national religion, men who are remarkable for breaking the laws of that religion would be at least neglected if not disgraced. The advancement of bad men to the highest offices in the law, is a disgrace to the government, and an injury to the people, whom it greatly corrupts; not only by the example, but by leading them to suppose, that the governors of the nation, whom they naturally imagine wiser than themselves, consider religion and morality merely as engines of state.

Though, therefore, the ſtudent may ſee men of infamous characters advanced and encouraged, let him not be deluded. If he is wiſe, he will ſtill pay his greateſt attention to the cultivation of a pure and honeſt heart; this will furniſh him with more ſatisfaction than was ever derived to a bad man from the inſignia and emoluments of office, and the fees beſtowed by popular favour. Whatever practice or preferment can be acquired conſiſtently with this, accept with gratitude. But if the public, or the rulers of the nation, ſtill prefer the bold pretender, whoſe appearance and abilities ariſe from that audacity which accompanies a bad and unfeeling heart, deſpiſe all that they can beſtow, and remember that this life is ſhort, and that there is another; that this world is the place of probation, and the next of reward. Remember that a pure heart, a clear conſcience, an independent ſpirit, and a ſoul that ſpurns the lucre which is to be gained by unmanly ſervility, are infinitely ſuperior (conſidered only as they tend to promote happineſs) to the poſſeſſion of the ſeals, with their uſual appendages, a peerage and a penſion.

With reſpect to the modes of preparation for this profeſſion, I ſee, with regret, that an illiberal method prevails, which conſiſts in confining the future advocate, like a clerk in a merchant's counting-houſe, to the deſk of ſome practiſing lawyer, teaching him the ordinary buſineſs almoſt mechanically. There he ſits, and copies a great number of dry formalities, ſuch as, if he attended to them, could not enlarge his mind; ſuch indeed, as, without a remarkable dulneſs of diſpoſition, he cannot attend to. After labouring for ſeveral years in a manual employment, as ſedentary, and ſcarcely more liberal than that of the weaver or the watchmaker, he comes forth a formidable barriſter; formidable, indeed, in ſome reſpects, as he has probably acquired a good deal of that low and dirty practice, and that narrow and confined mode of thinking, which a liberal mind would deſpiſe too much to be able to acquire. He reſembles a ſpider, and ſpins cobwebs in the dark and foul receſſes of the heart, to catch thoſe diminutive objects, which a more generous animal would not deign to enſnare.

The true method of arriving at an elegible ſpecies of emi-

pence in the ſtudy of law is, to enlarge the capacity of the mind by a moſt comprehenſive and claſſical education; and then to furniſh it with ſome portion of every ſpecies of human knowledge. A general and enlarged philoſophy, moral, natural, and theological, ought to form the firm baſis of the future ſuperſtructure. On this ſhould be built hiſtory, ancient and modern; general juriſprudence, and a particular acquaintance with the ſpirit of laws in all the civilized nations of antiquity. Long and accurate obſervation of men and manners ought to be added; and the virtues of exemplary benevolence and humanity ſhould complete the fabric. Such ſhould be the preparation;—what it is, we have already ſeen. But ſometimes even the toil of the writing-deſk, as well as every other ſerious preparation, is omitted, and the ſtudent called, to the bar, puts a large wig over his powdered hair and pig tail, and ſtarts up a pleader, ready to undertake any cauſe either of property or of life.

Whoever has read the works of Cicero, will remember how great a ſhare of learning he requires in his orator, who was, indeed, a pleader, or advocate; but not ſuch a pleader, or advocate as many of thoſe who have diſgraced the modern courts of judicature. The great ſtateſmen of Rome ſupported the character of lawyers with a peculiar dignity, unknown to modern inſtitutions. Adorned with philoſophy as well as law, they deſcended to the courts to defend their clients; not with the hope of a paltry fee, but induced by the pure motives of friendſhip and humanity; by a deſire of doing good, and a regard for juſtice. Men, it is true, muſt live by their profeſſions; and therefore the diſintereſtedneſs of the ancient lawyers, who had other reſources cannot be univerſally imitated. But, ſurely, in an age that pretends to peculiar illumination, and philanthrophy, and in a people who have long profeſſed a moſt humane religion, it is wonderful to find men, who aſſume ſo important a profeſſion, ready to defend any ſide for pay; and debaſing their characters by an affectation of extreme libertiniſm, of infidelity, and of every kind of profligacy which tends to harden the heart, and to deaden the feelings of humanity, no leſs than to ſtifle the ſentiments of true honour. Are ſuch men fit to preſide as judges, where life and death, liberty and property are at ſtake?

No. CXIII. ON SOME INCONVENIENCIES WHICH UNAVOIDABLY ATTEND LIVING WRITERS.

THE compoſition of a book has often been compared to the furniſhing of a feaſt, in which, whatever art may have been exerted, and variety produced, it ſeldom happens that every palate is equally pleaſed. Sometimes the diſhes are not dreſſed and ſeaſoned as they ought to be; and ſometimes the organs of ſenſation in the gueſts are languid and indiſpoſed. No work, however excellent, ever yet appeared, which was not blamed, as well as praiſed, by many; but we heſitate not to pronounce that good, which retains, during a conſiderable time, a majority of ſuffrages in its favour. Longinus, very reaſonably makes the favourable opinion of various nations for many ages, an infallible criterion of an author's ſingular excellence. And it is certain, that to call in queſtion the merits of thoſe books which have long ſurvived their authors, contributes more to diſgrace the critic, than to diminiſh the reputation of the author.

But it is not ſo with living writers. They labour under peculiar diſadvantages; not only from the difficulty of arriving at diſtinction after ſo many illuſtrious predeceſſors, but from the prejudices and the envy of their equals and contemporaries. Men have always felt an inclination to exalt departed genius, not only from a ſincere admiration of it, but alſo with a ſecret deſire to degrade living merit, by introducing an invidious compariſon. No one aſpires at the diſtinctions of fortune, or civil honours, without exciting jealouſy and envy. It would be therefore unreaſonable to ſuppoſe, that literary ambition ſhould be exempted from the attendants of all ambition. It aims at peculiar diſtinction, and muſt therefore excite peculiar oppoſition.

There never yet was a moral writer, however ſincere, whoſe life and external manners correſponded, in every reſpect with the dignity of his writings; and who did not, in ſome degree, diſappoint thoſe who were led by the admira-

tion of his works, to approach his perſon and to ſeek his company and converſation in the ordinary ſcenes of familiar life. Too high an expectation is uſually formed of him; and we do not conſider, that in his book we ſurvey only the picture of his mind; a picture which is uſually ſullied and deformed by the crazy frame in which it is confined. When he ſat down to write, his ſoul was probably in its proper ſtate; all ſpiritual, and all contemplative. No ſooner has he laid aſide his pen, and departed from his library, than he is neceſſarily engaged in the common purſuits of mankind; and diſplays, like them, many frailties, and many of thoſe faults which he has very ſincerely condemned in his moral diſſertations. But when a ſpectator, unacquainted with life, manners, and the inconſtancy of the human heart, beholds this difference between the writer's book and his behaviour, he too precipitately and ſeverely indulges his cenſure, and learns to deſpiſe him whom at a diſtance he admired. Thus are enemies and calumniators multiplied, without any other failings on the part of the injured perſon, than the common imbecilities attendant on the moſt improved ſtate of human nature. Foibles and errors, which would ſcarcely be noticed in others, are not only remarked in him, but remembered and related in company, as matter of entertainment. Even his ſincerity is doubted, and the writer is lowered by the imperfections of the man; though the imperfections are only the common characteriſtics of humanity. If he has written againſt avarice or ambition, and happens, by honeſt induſtry or good fortune, to gain money or promotion, he is immediately repreſented as a hypocrite; notwithſtanding he may have a family dependent upon him for ſupport, or may have worn himſelf out in the ſervice of the public, without ſeeking or gaining any other emolument than what may afford him an humble and quiet retreat in his old age.

It is not eaſy to write, without ſometimes appearing to aſſume an air of ſuperiority. Moral precepts would often be ineffectual, if they were not enforced in a ſtyle, which, though by no means dogmatical, is yet in a due degree authoritative. The neighbours, and the familiar acquaintance of the moraliſt, who are accuſtomed to eſtimate importance

by property, and to judge of the weight of a man's opinions by the weight of his purſe, are offended to find him, who has not a vote in a county meeting, nor an acre of arable or paſture on the face of the earth, daring to expreſs himſelf with as much freedom as if he were animated with the conſciouſneſs of keeeping a pack of fox-hounds, or had conſiderable influence at the election of a knight of the ſhire. Nevertheleſs, if what he writes be true, truth being great, he who is armed with it will certainly prevail. Reſiſtance or contradiction will be ineffectual. Nothing therefore remains but ridicule and detraction to ſap the fortreſs which is proof againſt aſſault. The writer, therefore, is repreſented by the neighbouring gentlemen as an oddity, a melancholy recluſe, and perhaps a little cracked; both he and his family are pitied by the humane ladies, for being perpetually confined to muſty books, and total ſtrangers to all true pleaſure. Between the ſippings of the tea, and the dealing of the cards, much criticiſm is diſplayed, in which it is not eaſy to determine which is the more conſpicuous, ignorance or ill-nature. It is not uncommon for ladies, who can hardly write their names, or indite a love-letter, without Entick's Spelling Dictionary, to decide on the merit of a celebrated poem, or any other new publication, with all the authority of an Ariſtotle, or the fooliſh virulence of a Zoilus. And who, indeed, can controvert a remark, however injudicious or malignant, when it proceeds from lips which add a grace and ſweetneſs to all they utter? And even the veteran virgin may be allowed to conſole herſelf, in the intervals of ſcandal, with the ſeverity of literary criticiſm. It muſt indeed be owned, that many lies and falſe cenſures on characters are publiſhed to the world at the tea and the card-table; but there is this comfort, that whenever it is known whence they originate, they are ſuffered, by all candid and ſenſible perſons, to drop, ſtill-born, from their prolific parents. Yet ſometimes they ſtruggle into life, and are able to murder many a reputation before their own final extinction.

Every thing excellent is to be paid for at a certain price of inconvenience or difficulty. The calumnies of envy, ignorance and impertinence, muſt be ſuſtained by him who

endeavours, by worthy means, to procure the esteem of the worthy. He must weigh the praises against the censures, and enjoy the predominant applause, while he neglects the severe remarks of impertinence or ill temper, as trifles light as air. No truth has been more repeatedly uttered, than that nothing in this sublunary state is, in every respect, what we wish it. We must then learn to submit to necessity, and turn our attention from our evils to our advantages. After all our complaints, Providence is usually found kind and impartial; and if we possess but humility and patience, we shall discover, under our most disagreeable situation, some copious source of placid enjoyment. The ill usage of the world will recoil from the heart, which is shielded with faith and innocence, as the billows are reverberated from the rock.

Whatever difficulties or injuries a writer may sustain, he may console himself, if he has always taken the part of truth and virtue, that he has employed the talents which God gave him, in a manner at least inoffensive; and that it is probable many, in the great mass of mankind, may possess a kindred spirit, and at some favourable moment may receive pleasure and advantage from his lucubrations, even when he is united with the dust from which he was taken, and become equally insensible to censure or applause.

No. CXIV. ON THE OBLIGATIONS WHICH LEARNING OWES TO THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

MANY among those who have made the greatest pretensions to learning have professed themselves enemies to Revelation. It is not, indeed, difficult to account for their rejection of a religion which is all humility, and by no means calculated to please such as consider the applause of men as the most valuable object, and who pride themselves on the infallibility of their own intellects. To the bold, the conceited, and the half learned pretender to philosophy, who is weak enough to think his reason commensurate to

every object which falls under its notice, that ſyſtem, which requires the exerciſe of faith more than of reaſon, appears, as the ſcriptures themſelves obſerve, fooliſhneſs. Pride, and a very ſilly kind of pride, ſuch indeed as ariſes from narrow views of things, and an ignorance of human nature, is the foundation of infidelity.

It is, however, no leſs ungrateful, than fooliſh and wicked, in the ſons of learning, to devote their abilities to the extermination of the national religion. For it is really true, that all the ancient learning which now remains, was preſerved by ſome peculiar circumſtances attending the propagation of Chriſtianity; and, I believe, it will be thought very probable, that if the ancient languages, and the books written in them, had been entirely loſt, the civilized nations of Europe would have ſtill continued in a ſtate of darkneſs and barbariſm. Real ſuperſtition would then, indeed, have reigned triumphant; and the philoſopher, as he calls himſelf, who is now writing down Chriſtianity, would have been trembling at witches and goblins, ſpells and enchantments. He makes uſe of that very light, which has directed his ſteps in the paths of learning, to diſcover the moſt probable means of extinguiſhing the ſource of all illumination.

I was led into this train of reflections by the peruſal of a charge of a late very learned archdeacon of London, in which he evinces, that our Saviour ſpoke moſt truly in more ſenſes than one when he ſaid of himſelf, "I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD."

When any ſpecies of literary induſtry is conſidered as a duty founded on religion, care will be taken to preſerve it. It might otherwiſe, from the indolence and infirmity of the human mind, have been loſt amidſt revolutions, perſecutions, diſtreſs, and the fury of conqueſt. In every difficulty, the Chriſtians fled for comfort to their ſcriptures, and watched over them with peculiar vigilance. The Septuagint preſerved, in the worſt times, a knowledge of Greek; and the Latin tranſlations, which were multiplied with avidity, reſcued the Latin language from a total oblivion. Joſephus was ſtudied, and therefore preſerved by the Chriſtians more carefully than by the Jews; and the neceſſity of Greek for

the understanding of the New Testament, caused that language not only to be saved from the ravages of time, but also to be studied with devout attention.

The fathers of the church wrote in Greek during three centuries; and at a time when the Latin language was gradually decaying, the latin fathers contributed something to its restoration; and wrote, as well as their coëval writers among the Pagans, not indeed with Augustan elegance, but still well enough to preserve a skill in the construction and vocabulary of the language.

A considerable knowledge of history, and something of chronology and philosophy, was necessary in studying and defending the scriptures, even in the earliest ages; and many Christians appeared well skilled in these parts of learning, at a time when they were generally neglected. Religion and conscience operated as a stimulus, when all other motives were insufficient to retard the mind in its swift progress down the declivity.

With a view, and solely with a view to enable ecclesiastics to read and understand the scriptures, even in the most dismal night of ignorance, there were some places of instruction in cathedrals and monasteries, in which the embers of literature, if we may venture to use that expression, were preserved from total extinction; in which a spark lay latent, which was one day to relume a light to lighten the universe.

The little learning of those unfortunate ages, though it did not enable the persons who possessed it to taste and understand the beauties of the ancient poets and philosophers, yet gave them some idea of the value of books in general, and enabled them to transcribe, with tolerable accuracy, even what they did not accurately understand. Thus were those inestimable treasures of all elegant and pleasing knowledge, the Old Greek and Latin authors, handed down to happier ages; to those who were able to unlock them, and pour out their riches for the general utility. Nor are we indebted to Christians for the classics only; but also for the Roman law, and the codes of Justinian and Theodosius. Books, which were destroyed by ignorant and angry kings and conquerors, found a safe asylum in religious houses;

and even Monkery, which has been juſtly reprobated as one of the follies of human nature, became, under the direction of Providence, the inſtrument of many of thoſe bleſſings which now contribute greatly to the happineſs and dignity of an enlightened empire.

The revival of learning, as it is termed, or its emancipation from churches and monaſteries, and general diffuſion over the world, is greatly owing to the efforts of eccleſiaſtics. There aroſe, in that auſpicious morning, a conſtellation of polite and profound Chriſtian ſcholars, whoſe effulgence has ſcarcely been outſhone by any ſucceeding luminaries in the literary horizon.

The beſt ſcholars of modern times, not only in theology, but in every part of human learning, have been Chriſtian divines. They were led, by their purſuit of religious knowledge, into the collateral paths of philoſophy, philology, and all elegant and uſual literature.

It is to the piety of Chriſtians that we owe the venerable foundations of ſchools and colleges; thoſe inſtitutions, which, though they have often been perverted, have ſtill kept the light burning like the veſtal fire, and handed the torch from one generation to another like the runners in the torch race. It was the love of Chriſt which taught thoſe towers to riſe on the banks of the Cam and the Iſis, and planted ſeminaries of learning in every conſiderable town throughout the kingdom.

"To the goſpel then," ſays the learned divine who ſuggeſted this ſubject, "and to thoſe who embraced it, are "due our grateful acknowledgments for the learning that "is at preſent in the world. The infidels, educated in "Chriſtian countries, owe what learning they have to "Chriſtianity, and act the part of thoſe brutes, which, "when they have ſucked the dam, turn about and ſtrike "her."

No. CXV. CURSORY REMARKS ON THE LIFE AND WRITING OF DR. JORTIN.

THE mind feels a ſecret complacency in contemplating characters eminent for virtue, learning, and religion; and there are few who are not delighted, as well as inſtructed, by the praiſes beſtowed on departed merit. Notwithſtanding the depravity of human nature, virtue ſtill appears amiable to the vicious, and knowledge to the ignorant. Experience, indeed, ſeems to confirm the opinion of Plato, that goodneſs, excluſive of its collateral advantages, is poſſeſſed of charms irreſiſtibly captivating.

A review of the life of the late Dr. Jortin cannot but ſuggeſt the moſt pleaſing reflections. As a poet, a divine, a philoſopher, and a man, he ſerved the cauſe of religion, learning, and morality. There are, indeed, many writers, whoſe reputation is more diffuſed among the vulgar and illiterate, but few will be found whoſe name ſtand higher than Dr. Jortin's in the eſteem of the judicious. His Latin poetry is claſſically elegant. His diſcourſes and diſſertations are ſenſible, ingenious, and argumentative. His remarks on eccleſiaſtical hiſtory intereſting and impartial. His ſermons replete with ſound ſenſe and rational morality, expreſſed in a ſtyle ſimple, pure, and perſpicuous.

Simplicity of ſtyle is a grace, which, though it may not captivate at firſt ſight, is ſure in the end to give permanent ſatisfaction. It does not excite admiration, but it raiſes eſteem. It does not warm to rapture, but it ſooths to complacency. Unſkilful writers ſeldom aim at this excellence. They imagine that what is natural and common cannot be beautiful. Every thing in their compoſitions muſt be ſtrained, every thing affected: but Dr. Jortin had ſtudied the ancients, and perhaps formed himſelf on the model of Xenophon. He wrote on ſubjects of morality, and morality is founded on reaſon, and reaſon is always cool and diſpaſſionate. A florid declamation, embelliſhed with rhetorical figures, and animated with pathetic deſcription, may indeed

amuſe the fancy, and raiſe a tranſient emotion in the heart; but rational diſcourſe alone can convince the underſtanding, and reform the conduct.

The firſt efforts of genius have commonly been in poetry. Unreſtrained by the frigidity of argument, and the confinement of rules, the young mind gladly indulges the flights of imagination. Cicero, as well as many other ancient philoſophers, orators, and hiſtorians, is known to have ſacrificed to the Muſes in his earlier productions. Dr. Jortin adds to the number of thoſe who confirm the obſervation. In his *Luſus Poëtici*, one of the firſt of his works, are united claſſical language, tender ſentiment, and harmonious verſe. Among the modern Latin poets, there are few who do not yield to Dr. Jortin. His Sapphics, on the ſtory of Bacchus and Ariadne, are eaſy, elegant, and poetical. The little ode, in which the calm life of the philoſopher is compared to the gentle ſtream gliding through a ſilent grove, is highly pleaſing to the mind, and is perfectly elegant in the compoſition. The lyrics are indeed all excellent. The poem on the immortality of the ſoul is ingenious, poetical, and an exact imitation of the ſtyle of Lucretius. The whole collection is ſuch as would ſcarcely have diſgraced a Roman in the age of an Auguſtus.

Time, if it cool not the fire of imagination, certainly ſtrengthens the powers of the judgment. As our author advanced in life, he cultivated his reaſon rather than his fancy, and deſiſted from his efforts in poetry, to exert his abilities in the diſquiſitions of criticiſm. His obſervations on one of the fathers of Engliſh poetry, need but to be more generally known, in order to be more generally approved.

Claſſical productions are rather amuſing than inſtructive. His works of this kind are all juvenile, and naturally flowed from a claſſical education. Theſe, however, were but preparatory to his higher deſigns, and ſoon gave way to the more important enquiries which were peculiar to his profeſſion. His diſcourſes on the Chriſtian Religion, one of the firſt fruits of his theological purſuits, abound with that ſound ſenſe and ſolid argument, which entitle their author to a rank very near the celebrated Grotius.

His dissertations are equally remarkable for taste, learning, originality, and ingenuity.

His remarks on ecclesiastical history are full of manly sense, ingenious strictures, and profound erudition. The work is highly beneficial to mankind, as it represents, in its proper light, that superstition which disgraced human nature, and gives a right sense of the advantages derived from religious reformation. He every where expresses himself with peculiar vehemence against the infatuation of bigotry and fanaticism. Convinced that true happiness is founded on a right use of the reasoning powers, he makes it the scope of all his religious works, to lead mankind from the errors of imagination, to the dictates of dispassionate reason.

Posthumous publications, it has been remarked, are usually inferior in merit to those which are published during an author's life. And, indeed, the opinion seems plausible; as it may be presumed, that an author's reason for not publishing his works, is a consciousness of their inferiority. The sermons of Dr. Jortin are, however, an exception. Good sense and sound morality appear in them, not, indeed, dressed out in the meretricious ornaments of a florid style, but in all the manly force and simple graces of natural eloquence. The same caprice, which raises to reputation those trifling discourses which have nothing to recommend them but a prettiness of fancy, and a flowery language, will again consign them to oblivion: but the sermons of Dr. Jortin will always be read with pleasure and edification.

The transition from an author's writings to his life, is frequently disadvantageous to his character. Dr. Jortin, however, when no longer considered as an author, but as a man, is far from being lessened in our opinion. A simplicity of manners, an inoffensive behaviour, an universal benevolence, candour, modesty, and good sense, were his characteristics. Though his genius, and love of letters, led him to chuse the still vale of sequestered life, yet was his merit conspicuous enough to attract the notice of a certain primate, who did honour to episcopacy. Unknown by personal acquaintance, and unrecommended by the solicitation of friends, or the interposition of power, he was present-

ed, by Archbiſhop Herring, to a valuable benefice in London, as a reward for his exertions as a ſcholar and a divine. Some time after, he became a chaplain to the late biſhop of London, who gave him the vicarage of Kenſington, and appointed him archdeacon of his dioceſe. This was all the preferment he had, nor had he this till he was advanced in life. He did not, however, repine. Thus he ſpeaks of himſelf:—"Not to his erudition—but to his conſtant love and "purſuit of it—he owes a ſituation and a ſtation better "than he expected, and as good as he ought to deſire."

Since the above remarks were written, I have been informed that ſeveral of the ſermons of Dr. Jortin are tranſlations from the French. He certainly was a great reader of French divinity; and he confeſſedly borrowed from it freely. It has been ſuggeſted to me, that he was not ſo remarkable for genius and invention, as induſtry and learning. His poetry, I think, proves that he poſſeſſed genius. Perhaps he overwhelmed it by a multifarious reading of authors who had much genius, and are not likely to excite it.

I muſt confeſs that it is poſſible I may have gone into the ſtyle of panegyric, from having known him perſonally, and beheld him when a boy, with reverence.

No. CXVI. ON THE UNION OF EXTRAVAGANCE IN TRIALS AND VICE, WITH PARSIMONY IN ALL THE TRULY HONOURABLE, USEFUL, AND NECESSARY EXPENCES.

NO appearance in the moral world is more remarkable, than that combination which is often obſerved in the ſame character, of avarice with profuſion, of meanneſs with liberality. Vanity, ſelfiſhneſs, and a want of ſerious principles, are ſtriking circumſtances in the manners of the preſent age; and as vanity leads to expenſive oſtentation, ſo ſelfiſhneſs and want of principle, have a natural tendency to produce covetouſneſs and rapacity. Very few reſtraints are allowed to operate on the modes of acquiring or of ſa-

ving money, except the fear of detection. There is scarcely any meanness or baseness to which many persons who make the greatest shew in dress, furniture, and equipage, are not ready to submit under the certainty of concealment.

The time has been when a great family residing in a great house of a village, was considered as a blessing to all the neighbouring country. The poor were employed in adorning and improving the grounds all about it. The table in the parlour was always open for the reception of the gentleman who resided within ten miles of the house; and the kitchen afforded warmth and plenty to the poor and industrious tenant or labourer. The rich man resided in the house of his fathers, and spent his money among those who earned it for him by the sweat of their brows. But, according to the modern system of fashionable manners, such a kind of life would be deemed intolerably dull, as well as antiquated and vulgar. The family, therefore, spend as little time as possible at the noble seat of their ancestors, but hasten to the sea-side, or the watering-places, where they hire a little hut or cabin, and lavish their money on strangers, with few returns of gratitude, or of rational satisfaction. The farmer, who lives in their native village, returning weary from his plough, shakes his head as he passes the cold kitchen, and turns with pity and contempt from the smokeless roof. The servants are pinched, and even envy the comparative plenty and independence of the next cottagers. The whole country rings with reports of the meanness and poor living at the great house. In the mean time, the lord and lady, the baronet or esquire, with their respective families, are figuring, as it is called, in all the profusion of emulous extravagance, at Bath or Brighthelmstone. While they grudge the bread and cheese which is consumed in their own house, or refuse to contribute to a brief, or any charitable institution among their poor neighbours at home, they subscribed, most liberally, to an infamous master of the ceremonies and to every fashionable amusement; they gave feasts to strangers whom they shall never see any more, and whose principal recommendation is, that they appear, from their external splendour, not to want assistance. Their vanity is gratified in seeing the great and the rich at their ta-

ble; and what signifies it, they think, if the wretches at home, whom nobody knows, starve and rot on the dunghills whence they originated. They grudge the poor even small beer in their own houses; but drench every rich guest, who visits them at their lodgings, with champagne and burgundy. How shall we account for such inconsistency, but by supposing that these personages possess large estates and little souls, immense vanity and diminutive understandings; and that the badness is only exceeded by the meanness of their hearts!

It is easy to observe persons of this description, who will not hesitate to expend many hundreds in dress alone, but who, when a book is praised in their presence, will spare no trouble in finding somebody of whom they may borrow it, alleging, in excuse, that books are so dear, it is impossible to buy every thing that comes out. The price of the book shall be three shillings, and it shall contain amusement for three weeks, and yet they will not buy it because it would be extravagant; though they will not scruple to expend three guineas, any night in the week, for three hours pastime in a party at the public places, of diversion. The milliners, the hair-dressers, the perfumers bills, shall amount to many hundreds a year; but five pounds expended at the book-seller's would be downright prodigality. Guineas flow, without restraint, in subscriptions to balls, concerts, assemblies; to dancing-masters, music-masters, and to players: but when the parish lecturer's book is brought, or the Marine Society, or the Magdalen, or the Infirmary, or the Contribution for the Release of Prisoners for Small Depts, or the poor blacks, or the prisoners of war, are recommended as fit objects to receive their superfluities, they immediately, look grave, complain that taxes rise and rents fall; and assert, with an unfeeling heart, that these are not times to admit of any expences which are not absolutely necessary.

The education of their children ought certainly to constitute one of the first cares of the rich; and no reasonable expence should be withheld in the accomplishment of it. But there are many great families in which this is one of the smallest articles of annual expenditure.

Indeed, in all neceſſary and laudable expences, a degree of frugality is diſplayed which approaches to extreme meanneſs and parſimony. The poor tradeſmen who ſupply the ordinary articles of domeſtic conſumption, are not only denied their price, but after every abatement are obliged to wait an unreaſonable time for their money. So far are ſuch perſons from poſſeſſing an inclination to be generous, that it grieves them to be juſt. But though they who furniſh commodities without which life cannot be ſupported, are ill-uſed and defrauded, whoever can ſupply any circumſtances of dreſs, equipage, luxury, by which ſelfiſhneſs and vanity may be gratified, are profuſely and immediately rewarded. Men of letters, or ingenuity in the profeſſions, are kept at a diſtance; but the door is always open to players, and to ſignors and ſignioras. Chaplains and tutors are out of faſhion; but their place is abundantly ſupplied by fiddlers, pipers, caperers, and ſcaramouches. A dancing or muſic-maſter, who can enable the young ladies to diſplay a fine finger or a fine foot, is immediately conſidered as the beſt friend of the family, made a companion, invited to the table, paid extravagantly, and complimented with thanks and preſents; neither is it wonderful, if the young ladies fall in love with theſe fine gentlemen, and marry them; ſince they appear, both in their own and their parents eyes, to poſſeſs the ſummit of all human excellence. As to the perſon who may be employed to form their minds, he is uſually engaged from the recommendation of cheapneſs, and is, for the moſt part, made an object of ridicule, becauſe he has not the air of Noverre and Gallini.

An enormous fortune, conſidered in its true light, is a ſacred truſt, and intended to promote, not only the happineſs of its poſſeſſor, but of all with whom he is connected, and who deſerve his beneficence. The time has been, when the poor were thought to have a claim upon that ſuperfluity, which is now laviſhed on the mean miniſters to luxury, vice and vain oſtentation. We read in the tablets in our churches, and in the records of all charitable foundations, that people of the higheſt faſhion were of opinion, that to be good was eſſential to the character of true gentility. But now, if we were to aſk the repreſentative of a rich family,

where he had bestowed the superfluities of the last year, he might answer, that he had deposited some share of it in the pocket of an Italian, who had the extraordinary merit of being able to stand longer on one leg than the rest of the two-legged and unfeathered race. He might answer, that he had lost it at the gaming table; spent it in the tavern and brothel; sported it away at Newmarket; lavished it on dogs, horses, jockies; and left the poor and the deserving to the care of Providence.

That Providence, whose blessings he abuses and perverts, seldom fails to punish his ingratitude; for as all his external circumstances have more in them of shew than of solidity, so also have all his boasted enjoyments, and all that happiness which he thinks to derive from riches, independently of their proper application.

No. CXVII. ON A TASTE FOR THE CULTIVATION OF FLOWERS, AND OF BEAUTIFUL SHRUBS AND TREES.

BEAUTY of every kind is formed to captivate, and there is this peculiar advantage in contemplating the beauties of vegetable nature, that we may permit our hearts to be ensnared by them, without apprehension of a dangerous or a dishonourable servitude. A taste for the beauties of vegetation is the mark of a pure and innocent mind, and, at the same time, one of the best preservatives of purity and innocence. It diverts the attention from the turbulent scenes of folly, and superinduces placid tranquillity, highly favourable to the gentler virtues, and to the permanency of our most refined enjoyments.

I have often been surprised to find those who possessed a very acute susceptibility of artificial or literary grace, and were powerfully affected by the beauties of a poem, a piece of sculpture, or a painting, not at all more sensible of the charms of a tree or a flowret, than a common and inelegant spectator. They have dwelt with rapture on a fine description of the Vale of Tempe, they have entered into all the delight which a Shakespeare or a Milton meant to commu-

nicate in their enchanting pictures of flowery and sylvan scenes, and yet can walk through a wood, or tread on a bed of violets and primroses, without appearing to be affected with any peculiar pleasure. This is certainly the effect of a superficial judgment; for there is no truth of which philosophers have been longer convinced, than that the realities of nature infinitely exceed the most perfect productions of imitating art.

The beauty of colour, though justly esteemed subordinate to that of shape, is yet found to delight the eye more immediately and more universally. When colour and shape are united in perfection, he who can view them with insensibility, must resign all pretensions to delicacy of perception. Such an union has been usually effected by nature in the formation of a flower.

There is scarcely a single object in all the vegetable world, in which so many agreeable qualities are combined, as in the queen of flowers, the rose. Nature certainly meant to regale the senses of her favourite with an object, which presents to him at once freshness, fragrancy, colour, and shape. The very soul seems to be refreshed on the bare recollection of the pleasure which the senses receive in contemplating, in a fine vernal morning, the charms of the pink, the violet, the honey-suckle, the hyacinth, the narcissus, the jonquil, the rocket, the tulip, and a thousand others, in every variety of figure, scent, and hue; for nature is no less remarkable for the accuracy and beauty of her works, than for variety and profusion. Defects are always discovered in the works of art when they are examined with a microscope; but a close examination of a leaf of a flower, is like taking off a veil from the face of a beauty. The finest needle ever polished, and pointed by the most ingenious artist, appears, when it is viewed by the solar microscope, quite obtuse; while the sting of a bee, however magnified, still retains all its original acuteness of termination. The serrated border in the petal of a flower, and the fringe on the wing of a fly, display an accuracy of delineation which no pencil ever yet could rival. The taste of the florist has not, indeed, been much admired, or generally aspired at; while that of the connoisseur in painting is considered as a mark

of elegance of character, and an honourable distinction. Yet surely it is an inconsistency to be transported with the workmanship of a poor mortal, and to feel no raptures in surveying those highly finished pictures, in which it is easy to trace the finger of the Deity.

The poets have given us most luxuriant descriptions of gardens and of rural scenery; and though they are thought by some to have exceeded reality, they have indeed scarcely equalled it. Enter a modern shrubbery, formed of a selection of the most agreeable flowering shrubs, and consider, whether there is any thing in the garden of Alcinous, in the fields of Elysium, in Milton's Paradise, to be compared with the intermixture of the lilac, the syringa, the laburnum, the double blossomed cherry, peach, and almond; with the rubinia, the jessamine, the moss-rose, the magnolia, and a great number of others, less common, but not of greater, though perhaps of equal, beauty. As we walk under clusters of flowers, white as snow, tinged with gold, purple as the grape, blue as the expanse of heaven, and blushing like the cheek of youth, we are led to imagine ourselves in fairy land, or in another and better world; where every delicate sense is delighted, and all around breathes fragrance, and expands beauty; where the heart seems to participate in the joy of laughing nature. Groves and gardens have, indeed, been always supposed to sooth the mind into a placid temper, peculiarly favourable to the indulgence of contemplation.

The excellent taste which now prevails in gardening, usually combines the shrubbery and the grove. The tall trees of the forest constitute the back-ground in the living landscape, and the shrubs, beneath and before them, form the underwood, in a delightful resemblance to the natural coppice, and the uncultivated forest. The plane tree is one of the first beauties among those which are now most frequently planted in our gardens. Its large leaf, and permanent verdure, render it peculiarly fitted to afford a shade. I always consider it as a classical tree, for the ancient writers often mention it; and some of the finest philosophical dialogues of antiquity passed under the cool retreat of its broad and vivid foliage. Socrates sought no other theatre than

the turf that grew under the plane tree, on the banks of the Iliſſus. The weeping willow, that droops over the babbling ſtream, conſtitutes one of thoſe fine beauties which partake of the melancholy and romantic. Such, indeed, are the charms of its luxuriant branches, that, when properly ſituated, it is of itſelf an enchanting picture. Beautiful as are all the features of the modern garden. I ſhould not heſitate to allot the firſt place in an eſtimate of horticultural graces to the weeping-willow. The weeping-birch is at all times pleaſing, and a moſt delightful object in winter. Obſerve yonder tall ſtem, riſing from the interſtices of a craggy rock, covered with a rind white and gloſſy like ſilver, and drooping with ten thouſand fine twigs, ſo attenuated as to appear almoſt capillary. View it when ſprinkled with hoar froſt, or with ſnow, and if you have a ſoul capable of being charmed with natural beauty, you will be ſenſibly affected at the ſight with a ſweet complacency. An old oak is not often found in our gardens, becauſe of its tardy vegetation; but whenever it appears in them, it produces all the effect of graceful majeſty, and one may contemplate it for hours with ſtill new delight. The delicate acacia, the conical poplar of Lombardy, the flowery cheſnut, the ſoft lime, the elegant mountain aſh, the aſpiring fir, the gloſſy laurel, theſe all form ſo various and delightful pictures, that while I am permitted to expatiate over the lawn, and penetrate the mazes of the wood and garden, I ſhall not repine that it is not my lot to ſaunter in the picture galleries of a palace.

The taſte for plantation prevails greatly in this country, and it ought to be encouraged, as it is a never-failing ſource of pleaſure to the planter, and of improvement to the community. But it is to be hoped, that while we plant the tree for ornament, we ſhall not forget to drop the acorn, and raiſe that heart of oak, which bears analogy to the bravery of the people; and has ever been to this land, *et præſidium et decus*, both a bulwark and a beauty.

No. CXVIII. ON THE CHARACTER OF ADDISON AS A POET.

THE luſtre of a great name not only ſets off real beauties to the greateſt advantage, but adds a grace to deformity, and converts a defect to an excellence. The enthuſiaſtical admirers of a favourite author, like ardent lovers, view thoſe objects with rapture, which cauſe in others indifference or diſguſt. Without conſidering the inequalities of the ſame genius, and the diverſities of ſubjects, they are led to conclude, from the excellence of one part of an author's works, that all are excellent; and that whatever bears his ſignature, is genuine wit, and juſt taſte.

I know not whether even Mr. Addiſon, who is ſo deſervedly eſteemed the honour of our nation, was not indebted for a ſmall part of his reputation to the blind bigotry of prejudice. On any other ſuppoſition, I know not how he could have been admired as a very eminent poet. The diſpaſſionate temperature which conſtituted a ſolid judgment, and qualified him for the cool diſquiſitions of criticiſm and morality, rendered him incapable of that animated ſpirit which is the ſoul of poetry. But the reader is unwilling to believe, that ſo accurate a critic, and ſo correct a writer, is himſelf faulty; and therefore, when he paſſes from his proſe to his poetry, and obſerves a manifeſt inferiority and deficiency of merit in the latter, he rather inclines to diſtruſt his own judgment than the abilities of the author. Reader after reader has toiled through the ſame dull rhimes, perhaps blind to their faults, or, if ſenſible of their defects, yet inclined to join in their praiſe, in oppoſition to conviction, from a dread of the imputation of a depraved taſte. Had not a veneration for his name prevented critics from ſpeaking their real ſentiments, though Addiſon would, as a moral eſſayiſt, moſt juſtly have been called the Socrates, Plato, or Xenophon of his age; yet he would never have been eſteemed one of the firſt of poets.

It would be injuſtice while we inſpect theſe volumes, to

pass over in silence, the elegant poem which is prefixed to the works of Addison, on the death of their author. The melancholy flow of the verse is well adapted to express the tenderness of the sentiments. The beauty of the imagery and the energy of the expression, entitle this little piece to a very respectable rank among the elegiac compositions of the English writers. It was for a long time little regarded; but the attention lately paid to it, and the commendations bestowed on it, are proofs that literary merit, however unnoticed for a time, through accident, prejudice, or party, is sure to receive the applause it deserves from impartial posterity.

At the end of the verses of Addison to Mr. Dryden, we are told that the author was but twenty-two years of age when he wrote them. Whether the age was affixed to extenuate the imperfections, or to enhance the merits of the poem, certain it is, that both those intentions are frustrated by its extreme insignificance and futility. The production is unworthy the age of twenty-two. Mr. Pope is known to have written his pastorals, which infinitely exceed the versification of Addison, at sixteen; and Milton acquired an elegance in Latin verse at an earlier period. The thoughts in this piece are not striking, the style is contemptible, and the negligence in the rhyme alone would, in the present refinement of taste, consign the work to oblivion.

That all his pieces are upon a level with this, cannot be asserted. That some of them abound with grand conceptions, and have many good lines, must be confessed. But allowing Addison all the merit in his poetry, which candour, or even partiality in his favour can allow, he never can be justly esteemed one of the first poets of the nation. I never heard that Socrates increased his fame by his poetical version of Æsop's Fables, and the best prose-writer in the best age of Rome wrote the line, "*O fortunatam, natam, me consule, Romam.*" The truth is, nature usually bestows her gifts with a prudent liberality even to her favourites. One might on this occasion apply to Addison the passage of Martial, "*Hoc Ciceronis habes.*" This character of a bad poet you have in common with the great Cicero.

To oppose opinions universally received, is to incur the imputation of vanity, ignorance, and want of taste; but as every individual has a right to private judgment, and may offer his sentiments to others, while he does it with modesty, professes a possibility of mistake, and keeps his mind open to conviction, I have ventured to advance an opinion against the poetical merit of Addison; regardless how it may alarm those who submit their judgments to the direction of others, and who pay an implicit obedience to authority.

No. CXIX. THE FOLLY OF BRINGING UP CHILDREN TO A LEARNED PROFESSION, WITHOUT THE PROBABILITY OF PROVIDING THEM WITH A COMPETENCY.

THAT admiration is the effect of ignorance, is a truth universally confessed; and nothing so forcibly excites the wonder of the illiterate plebeian, as the character of profound erudition.

Dazzled by the splendor of literary honours, many an honest parent has prevented his son from acquiring a fortune behind the counter, to see him starve in a pulpit.

These reflections were occasioned by meeting an old friend at a coffee-house one evening last week. His looks were meagre, his dress shabby, and he sufficiently apologized for the rustiness of his coat, by the following narrative:

"My father," said he, after some preliminary conversation, "was a shoemaker of tolerable business in London; "a very honest man, and very much given to reading godly books, whenever he could steal a moment from the "lap-stone and the last. As I was the only child, he took "great delight in me, and used frequently to say, that he "hoped in time to see me Archbishop of Canterbury, and "no such great matters neither; for as to my parentage, I "was as good as many a one that had worn a mitre; and "he would make me as good a *scholard* too, or it should "go hard with him.

"My destination to the church was thus unalterably "fixed before I was five years old; and in consequence

" of it, I was put to a grammar-school in the city, whence, " after a thousand perils of the cane, and perils of the rod, " I went to the university on an exhibition of fifteen pounds " a-year, which my father obtained from one of the city " companies, with no small difficulty. So scanty an al- " lowance would by no means defray the enormous expence " of university education, and my father, whose pride would " not let me appear meaner than my companions, very " readily agreed to pay me forty pounds out of the yearly " profits of his trade, and to debar himself many innocent " gratifications, in order to accomplish in me the grand " object of all his ambition.

" In consequence of my father's desire, that I should " complete the full term of academical education, I did not " go into orders till I was of seven years standing, and had " taken the degree of Master of Arts. I was therefore " incapable of receiving any pecuniary emoluments from " my studies, till I was six-and-twenty. Then, however, " I was resolved to make a bold push, and to free my father " from the burthen of supporting me with half the profits " of his labours. The old man was eager that I should " attempt to get some kind of preferment; not, as he " would generously say, that he wanted to withdraw his " assistance, but that he thought it was high time to begin " to look up at the bishoprick.

" I hastened to London as the most ample field for the " display of my abilities, and the acquisition of money and " fame. Soon after my arrival, I heard of a vacant lecture- " ship; and though I was an entire stranger to every one " of the parishioners, I resolved to trust my cause to honest " endeavours, and a sedulous canvass. I shall not trouble " you with an enumeration of the several indignities I suf- " fered (for I had not lost my university pride,) from be- " ing under the necessity to address, with the most abject " supplications, chandlers, barbers, and green-grocers. Suf- " fice it to acquaint you, that myself, and another young " clergyman of regular education, appeared on the day of " election, to have but seventeen votes between us; and " that a methodistical enthusiast, who had once been a car- " penter, bore away the prize with a majority of a hun- " dred and twenty.

" Though disappointed, I was not dejected; and I applied to a certain rector for his curacy, the duty of which " consisted in prayers twice a day, a sermon on Sundays, " and innumerable burials, christenings, and weddings. I " thought myself happy, however, in being offered forty " guineas a year, without surplus, or surplice fees; but " how was I chagrined, on being told by the rector, on the " very first Sunday I went to officiate, that I need not trouble myself, as another gentleman had undertaken the " whole duty at forty pounds!

" I waited a considerable time in expectation that something else would fall; but heard of nothing in which " there was the least probability of success, unsupported, " as I was by friends, and unknown to fame. At last, I " was informed by an acquaintance, that a certain clergyman was about to resign his lectureship, and that he " would probably resign in my favour, if I were early enough in my application. I made all the haste I possibly could to reach this gentleman before his resignation; " and found very little difficulty in persuading him to " intercede in my favour. In short, his endeavours, joined " to my own, secured the lectureship, and I was unanimously " chosen. The electors, however, expressed a desire that I " would quit my place of residence, which was at a distance, and live in the parish. To this request I consented; and immediately fixed myself in a decent family, " where I lodged and boarded for fifty pounds a-year; and " as I was not so ambitious as my father, I congratulated " myself on the happy event, and sat down contented and " satisfied. But, alas! how was I confounded, when my " collectors brought the annual contribution, to find it amount to no more than the exact sum of twenty-one " pounds two shillings and three pence three farthings! I " was under an immediate necessity of discharging my lodging, resigning my preferment, and quietly decamping " with the loss of no inconsiderable sum.

" Thus, Sir," said he, " have I now for these twenty " years been tossed about in the world without any fixed residence, and without any certain prospect of my bread. " I must not, however complain, as I am well assured there

" are many in the metropolis in situations very similar to " mine. Yet sometimes I own, I cannot help being fool- " ish enough to imagine, that I might, perhaps, have been " happier, and I am sure I could have been richer, had I " been brought up to my paternal awl and last. My poor " father died about two years ago, and I have reason to " think, his disappointment and sorrow for my ill-success " hastened his dissolution.

" I now support myself tolerably well in the capacity of, " what the world ludicrously calls, a Hackney Parson. And " though I do not get quite so much as a journeyman " shoe-maker, I make shift to keep soul and body together; " and I thank God for that. If, Sir, you could recom- " mendme, here is my address, up four pair of stairs."——

He was proceeding, but he had too powerfully excited my sympathy; and after consoling him to the best of my power, I took my leave of him, not without severe reflections on those parents, who, to indulge a childish vanity, bring up their offspring to misery and want.

No. CXX. ON DECENCY AS THE ONLY MOTIVE OF OUR APPARENT VIRTUES, AND PARTICULARLY OF OUR RELIGIOUS BEHAVIOUR.

WHATEVER may be the vices of this age, it cannot be said to be particularly distinguished by hypocrisy. Selfishness reigns triumphant; and men for the most part, pursue whatever they think conducive to their own pleasure or interest, without regarding appearances, or the opinions of others, except, indeed, when their interest or their pleasure are immediately concerned.

Even they who fill offices of confidence and honour in the community, are, in this age, fond of divesting themselves of that external dignity with which the wisdom of our ancestors judged it right to surround them. They descend with a peculiar kind of pride from their natural or political eminence, and will not even display the appearance of those virtues and abilities which are absolutely necessary in

their offices and ſtations. They oſtentatiouſly exhibit a careleſſneſs and profligacy in their converſation and behaviour, which, if they really poſſeſs, ought to diſplace them from their rank, and ſtrip them of their bluſhing honours.

In thoſe who fill public offices, or who are fixed in the more important profeſſions, a regard to external decency is itſelf a virtue. But, in truth if the preſent diſordered ſtate of things would permit, none ought to fill thoſe offices and profeſſions, whoſe regard to decency does not ariſe from a regard to virtue.

There are, indeed, many who are eſteemed good ſort of perſons, but whoſe goodneſs is unprincipled, and appears to ariſe ſolely from a regard to external decorum, or, what is called, the ſaving of appearances. And this motive, poor and contemptible as it is, in compariſon with rational principles ariſing from conviction, is very often the only avowed motive for the regular performance of all external duties; but more particularly of thoſe which concern religion. The following imaginary tranſaction will, perhaps, ſuggeſt an idea of that poor and political decency which it is thought a very extraordinary effort of virtue to maintain. Let us then invent a ſcene of fiction by way of exemplification.

" We muſt have a faſt-day ſoon," ſays the ſtateſman, " for the Americans have had one already." " It is unneceſſary," replies the privy counſellor in the jockey dreſs, aiming at a wretched pun, " it is all a farce." " Between " friends," ſubjoins the ſtateſman, " I am not fonder of " ſuch fomalities than you are; but you know it is decent, " and we muſt conform, externally at leaſt, to the prejudices " of the mob." " It is decent, my lord," re-echoes the bench of biſhops.

" There is a ſermon preached to-day before the Houſe " of Lords," ſays a member; " True," ſays another, " but I vote it a *bore*; and beſides, I am engaged to ſee a " fine bitch pointer that I think of buying," " Well," reſumes the other, " but let us make a party of two or three " to church, becauſe it is decent." " We beg, my lords," ſoftly whiſpers an epiſcopal voice, " you would not

" put yourſelves to the ſmalleſt inconvenience, for half a do-
" zen of us have determined, though we have a thouſand
" engagements, to poſtpone them an hour or two for the
" ſake of decency. Decency, my lord, muſt ſuperſede
" every conſideration." " Will you go to church, my
" lord duke?" ſays one, lowly bowing to his patron. " No;
" I think it decent, but you will be there on that account;
" and as I am engaged to-day at billiards, I beg to be ex-
" cuſed :———but I hope there will be enough there to
" make a decent appearance."

Among the gay ſenators of the Britiſh empire it has been obſerved, that very few of late, have diſplayed, in this inſtance, even that ſubordinate virtue of which we ſpeak, a regard to external decency. Weſtminſter Abbey, indeed, is not a place to be frequented for pleaſure by thoſe who chiefly ſhine in the ſtand at a horſe-race. One or two officers however do attend a ſermon officially, and a few others for the ſake of decency; but the knowing ones conſider the whole buſineſs to expreſs their own ideas in their own language, as a curſed lounge. This buſineſs therefore, and many others of a moſt ſolemn, ſacred, and venerable nature, being conſidered merely as incumbrances by the jolly part, which is the greater part, they are utterly neglected, or attended by a few only, whoſe intereſt compels them to have a regard to decency.

Our religion teaches us to ſeparate one day out of ſeven for religious purpoſes. But many of the wiſe men, who were born to be our Engliſh Solons and Lycurgi, conſider the inſtitution merely as a fooliſh ſuperſtition; and therefore ſpend the Sabbath, like the charming people abroad, at cards and in diſſipation, and very much lament thoſe groſs prejudices of the common people, which render it decent and prudent not to open the theatres, and enliven the horrid dulneſs of the Seventh Day by public diverſions. Even mighty good ſort of people, as they are uſually called, heſitate not to confeſs, that a regard to external decency is one of the chief motives of their regular conduct in obſerving the Sabbath, and other virtuous practices of our forefathers.

It would not be difficult to trace this motive of decency in many of the apparent virtues, which display themselves, with no little ostentation, in every department of human life. But it is really better to pay that deference to virtue which arises from assuming the appearances, than by impudent and avowed contempt of it, to injure others by the example. To have merely a regard to decency in common life, and in a wicked and unprincipled age, becomes in some degree virtuous. We will not, therefore, expose this unsound virtue to severe censure, except when it appears in religion, where, whatever appearances are insincere, constitute hypocrisy of a most detestable kind; hypocrisy, founded on self-interest. It is the man of *decent* character (and with this view alone he is decent), who rises, to preferment; and then laughs in his lawn sleeves at the humble Christian in tattered crape, who is too sincere to be political, too sound in the inner man to want or admit the varnish of the whited sepulchre.

Pope has said, that Secker was decent, and that Rundle had a heart. Whether the censure or the praise was just is not mine to determine. All I shall remark on the passage is, that though decency may smooth the way to courts, and insinuate itself into the highest seats of preferment, it is a heart only which is capable of deriving, from the success, a pure and solid satisfaction. Though decency without sincerity may be approved by narrow politicians, and even gain the applause of the multitude by deceiving them; yet let not the hypocrite triumph, but remember, that there is One before whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden.

No. CXXI. ON THE ANIMOSITIES OCCASIONED IN THE COUNTRY BY THE GAME LAWS

IN a late paper on the disagreements of a country neighbourhood, I purposely omitted one of the most fruitful causes of them, intending to consider it in a paper by itself, consistently with its extensive and important operation. I

believe it will be allowed by all who have made remarks, that the individuals of this nation are more ſeriouſly and inveterately divided by diſputes about the Game, than by controverſies, which make much more noiſe in the world on the ſubjects of politics or religion. What remains among us of ſavageneſs and brutality is chiefly preſerved by the mean and ſelfiſh greedineſs of thoſe who poſſeſs a thouſand peculiar advantages, and who yet meanly contend for an excluſive right to deſtroy the Game; that uſufructuary property, which the Creator intended to be poſſeſſed by the firſt occupant, like the air, light, and water.

Some reſtraints however of that kind, which tend to prevent the poor labourer from waſting his valuable time, might, perhaps, be neither unjuſt, nor, in any reſpect, attended with inconvenience. But the Game Laws, as they now ſubſiſt in England, are a diſgrace to the noble fabric of our free conſtitution. They are illiberal in their nature; they originated in ſlavery, and they lead to tyranny. It is remarked by Burn, and the great commentator on our legal ſyſtem, that, in one ſtatute only for the preſervation of Game, there are not leſs than ſix blunders in grammar, beſides other miſtakes; ſo that one is led to conclude, that this part of our boaſted code was drawn up by a committee of booriſh country eſquires and ſtupid fox-hunters. Indeed, the whole body of the Game Laws is replete with perplexity, abſurdity, and contradiction. What can be more ridiculous, than that the legiſlature of a mighty empire ſhould require one hundred a year as a qualification to ſhoot a poor patridge, and only forty ſhillings to vote for a ſenator? "There is another offence," ſays Blackſtone, "ſo conſti-
"tuted by a variety of acts of parliament, which are ſo nu-
"merous and ſo confuſed, and the crime itſelf of ſo queſ-
"tionable a nature, that I ſhall not detain the reader with
"many obſervations thereupon. And yet it is an offence
"which the ſportſmen of England ſeem to think of the
"higheſt importance; and a matter, perhaps the only
"one, of general and national concern; aſſociations having
"been formed all over the kingdom to prevent its deſtruc-
"tive progreſs; I mean the offence of deſtroying ſuch
"beaſts and fowls as are ranked under the denomination of

Game." Upon the whole, it may be truly said, that an Englishman, who has a regard for the honour of his country, and sense enough to see the mean and arbitrary spirit of the Game Laws, and the nonsense of the letter, must hide his face in confusion, when he considers how much time and attention have been spent upon them by the British legislature.

Rural diversions certainly constitute a very pleasing and proper amusement for all ranks above the lowest. Every man who has a just claim to the title of gentleman, or indeed, who is capable of spending his time in amusement, without injuring the public or his own family, ought to be suffered to partake of them: if he gives up his hours, his labour, and his thoughts to the pursuit, he has earned a right to the object, since the object is of a nature which cannot be appropriated while alive and at liberty. A fellow-creature is agreeably amused and benefited, and no man robbed, since the bird that flies in the air no more belongs to the tenant of the mansion-house, than the sun-beam which equally shines on the cottage and the palace. Poor is the opulence, and little the grandeur, that shews a disposition which would undoubtedly engross, if it were possible, the light and the air.

With respect to the matter of a trespass, it is certain, that a lord of the manor is no less liable to be prosecuted for it on his own manor than any other person, whether qualified or unqualified. It shews, therefore, the ignorance, as well as arbitrary disposition of these petty princes, when they claim the privilege of prowling for prey, without controul, on their neighbours land, and of excluding all others from their own. In short, it is extremely doubtful what privileges the lord of the manor possesses; and whether he has a better right to hunt and shoot, without a particular grant from the king, than the meanest subject whom he bullies and browbeats. The contemptible laws which have been made on this business certainly want illustration and amendment. Indeed they ought to be torn out of the statute book; and the memory of them, like that of feudal ignorance and slavery, execrated.

There is a practice particularly mean and oppressive,

which very much prevails in this ſelfiſh age, among the engroſſers of that part of the creation which God and nature have conſtituted free as the ſeas and the winds. They do not conſider the purſuit of Game in the liberal light of a gentleman-like diverſion, but view the hare and the patridge as provender for the table at once genteel and cheap. They therefore ſeldom give themſelves the trouble to join in the chace, or carry the gun over the furrows; but ſelect ſome idle peaſant, who by poaching, has acquired a ſkill in the arts of deſtroying Game; clothe him in green pluſh, and ſend him to provide pheaſants, and bid defiance to his ſuperiors, whenever the maſter has company to dine with him, and wiſhes to ſave an article in the butcher's account. This green-coated hero, who is uſually one of the greateſt ſcoundrels in the pariſh, ſallies forth under the protection of the lord or lady of the manor; and if he meets a curate, or an apothecary, or a reputable tradeſman, or even a neighbouring lord of the manor, boldly inſults them threatens to ſhoot their dogs, or ſeize their fowling-pieces; and juſtifies all his inſolence by alleging, that what he does or ſays is all by his maſter's order. Appeal to that maſter, and, probably, the inſults are aggravated; or, if he pretends to uncommon affability, he will allow that the fellow is apt to be a little foul-mouthed; but, upon the whole, is a very faithful ſervant. The low wretch himſelf might, indeed, be puniſhed both for his treſpaſs and his ill-uſage; but though he inſulted his proſecutors in the field, he is ready, like all upſtart and petty potentates, to bend on his knees for mercy, and uſually diſarms the generous by pleading a wife and ſix children. I know not which ought to predominate, compaſſion for the poor deluded peaſant, or contempt for his employer. It is ſurely enough that the rich man claims an excluſive right to the commoners of nature himſelf; and he ought by no means to be ſuffered to commiſſion the loweſt plebeian to do that which he prohibits in gentlemen of the profeſſions; of fortunes as independent, if not ſo great, as his own, and of minds often much greater.

It is in the power of theſe hirelings, who ſeldom poſſeſs much principle, to involve all the country in animoſity. The landed gentry uſually poſſeſs a ſhare of pride fully propor-

tionate to their eſtate and manſion-houſe. The hireling of one treſpaſſes on the dominions of another. Reprifals are made. Each defends his repreſentatives. One thinks himſelf as *good* (for that is the phraſe) as the other. No conceſſions can poſſibly be made. Hatred of the bittereſt and moſt rancoureſt kind, mutually takes poſſeſſion of theſe lords in miniature; and many a hunting would end, if vaſſals could be procured, like that of Chevy Chace, in a bloody battle.

If compaſſion did not intervene, one might be much entertained with ſo ludicrous an object, as that of creatures, who pretend to reaſon, benevolence, chriſtianity, and education, rendering their exiſtence mutually painful, by fierce quarrels, ſecret but venomous hatred, expenſive and vexatious litigations, occaſioned by objects of a nature truly trifling in themſelves, and which, allowing them every poſſible praiſe, can be called no more than innocent diverſions. Are we not ſtill children with all our beard and gravity about us, if we play till we quarrel? Our conduct in this reſpect, is almoſt too abſurd to admit of ſerious expoſtulation. It may furniſh ſcenes for mirth at a puppet-ſhew, or a farce at Bartholomew Fair.

However, I think it neceſſary, before I conclude this ſubject, to declare for the ſake of avoiding the malignant miſinterpretations of goſſips and ſcandal-dealers by profeſſion, that there are no alluſions in this paper either perſonal or local; and that I have not been pleading for a privilege in which I am intereſted, not being inclined to hunt, nor able to ſhoot.

I will beg leave to add one paſſage on the ſubject from Blackſtone, for the information of thoſe among ſportſmen, who are too tenacious of their excluſive rights, and who are able to read it.

"Another violent alteration of the Engliſh conſtitution, "conſiſted in the depopulation of whole countries for the "purpoſes of the king's royal diverſion; and ſubjecting "both them, and all the ancient foreſts of the kingdom, to "the unreaſonable ſeverity of foreſt laws, imported from "the continent; whereby the ſlaughter of a beaſt was made "almoſt as penal as the death of a man. In the Saxon

" times, though no man was allowed to kill or chace the " king's deer, yet he might ſtart any game, purſue, and " kill it upon his own eſtate. But the rigour of theſe new " conſtitutions veſted the ſole property of all the game in " England in the king alone; and no man was allowed to " diſturb any fowl of the air or any beaſt of the field, of " ſuch kinds as were ſpecially reſerved for the royal amuſe- " ment of the Sovereign, without expreſs licence from the " king, by the grant of a chace or free warren: and thoſe " franchiſes were granted as much with a view to preſerve " the breed of animals as to indulge the ſubject. From " a ſimilar principle to which, though the Foreſt Laws " are now mitigated, and by degrees grown entirely obſo- " lete; yet from this root has ſprung a baſtard ſlip, known " by the name of the Game Law, now arrived to, and wan- " toning in its higheſt vigour, both founded upon the ſame " unreaſonable notions of permanent property in wild crea- " tures, and both productive of the ſame tyranny to the " commons: but with this difference; that the Foreſt Laws " eſtabliſhed only one mighty hunter throughout the land, " *the Game Laws have raiſed a little Nimrod in every manor.* " And in one reſpect the ancient law was much leſs unrea- " ſonable than the modern; for the king's grantee of a " chace or free warren, might kill game in every part of his " franchiſe; but now though a free-holder of leſs than one " hundred a year is forbidden to kill a patridge on his own " eſtate, yet nobody elſe (not even the lord of the manor, " unleſs he hath a grant of free warren) can do it without " committing a treſpaſs, and ſubjecting himſelf to an ac- " tion.

No. CXXII. ON THE IMPORTANCE OF GOVERNING THE TEMPER.

NOTWITHSTANDING the many complaints of the calamities of human life, it is certain that more conſtant uneaſineſs ariſes from ill temper than from ill fortune. In vain has providence beſtowed every external

bleſſing, if care has not been taken by ourſelves to ſmooth the aſperities of the temper. A bad temper embitters every ſweet, and converts a paradiſe into a place of torment.

The government of the temper then, on which the happineſs of the human race ſo greatly depends, can never be too frequently or too forcibly recommended. But as it was found by ſome of the ancients one of the moſt efficacious methods of deterring young perſons from any diſagreeable or vicious conduct, to point out a living character in which it appeared in all its deformity, I ſhall exhibit a picture, in which I hope a bad temper will appear, as it really is, a moſt unamiable object.

It is by no means uncommon to obſerve thoſe, who have been flattered for ſuperficial qualities at a very early age, and engaged in ſo conſtant a ſeries of diſſipating pleaſure, as to leave no time for the culture of the mind, becoming, in the middle and advanced periods of life, melancholy inſtances of the miſerable effects reſulting from an ungoverned temper. A certain lady, whom I ſhall diſtinguiſh by the name of Hiſpulla, was celebrated from her infancy for a fine complexion. She had, indeed no very amiable expreſſion in her eyes, but the vermilion of her cheeks did not fail to attract admiration, and ſhe was convinced by her glaſs, and by the aſſeverations of the young men, that ſhe was another and a fairer Helen. She had every opportunity of improving her mind; but as we naturally beſtow our firſt care on the quality which we moſt value, ſhe could never give her attention either to books or to oral inſtruction, and at the age of fifteen or ſixteen could ſcarcely write her name legibly, or read a ſentence without heſitation. Her perſonal charms were, however, powerful enough to captivate the heart of a thoughtleſs heir, very little older than herſelf. Her vanity, rather than her love, was gratified by the alliance; and when ſhe found the aſſiduities of promiſcuous ſuitors at an end ſhe found herſelf gradually ſinking in the dead calm of inſipidity. When love was no more, other paſſions ſprung up with all the luxuriancy of rank weeds, in a ſoil where no ſalutary herb has been planted in the vernal ſeaſon. Pride, that fruitful plant which bears every kind of odious quality in abundance, took root in her heart, and

flouriſhed like the nettle or the hemlock on the banks of the ſtagnant pool.

Her huſband was the firſt to feel its baneful effects. Though the match was greatly to her advantage, ſhe perſuaded herſelf that ſhe might have done better; and that her good fortune was by no means adequate to the prize which her beauty and merit might have juſtly claimed. With this conviction, and without any habits or abilities which might lead her to ſeek amuſement in books ſhe found no diverſion ſo congenial to her heart, as the tormenting a good-natured, young, and agreeable huſband, who, by marrying, had excluded her from the probability of a title. As a ſmall compenſation for the injury received, ſhe aſſumed an abſolute dominion over him, his fortune and his family. He durſt not differ in opinion from her; for on the ſlighteſt oppoſition, her eyes dart fire, her cheeks glow with indignation, and her tongue utters every bitter word which rage and malace can dictate. The comfort of every meal is poiſoned by a quarrel and an angry vociferation is re-echoed from the parlour to the kitchen, from the cellar to the garret, by night and by day, except in the awful and ominous pauſe of a ſullen ſilence.

The poor huſband, who, with every amiable diſpoſition, poſſeſſed alſo the virtue of patience, bore the evil as long as human nature could bear it; but as years advanced, and her fury increaſed, he ſought a refuge at the tavern, and in the compoſing juice of the grape. Exceſs and vexation ſoon laid him in the only ſecure aſylum from the ſtings and arrows of an outrageous temper, the ſilent tomb.

The children, after ſuffering every ſpecies of perſecution which an angry, though fooliſhly fond mother could inflict, no ſooner arrived at maturity, than they began to look for happineſs in an eſcape from home, where neither peace nor eaſe could find a place. The daughters married meanly, unworthily, and wretchedly, contented to take refuge from the rage of a furious mother in the arms of footmen and hair-dreſſers; the ſons ran away, and became vagrant and wretched debauchees; till, in mere deſpair, one of them entered as a ſoldier in the Eaſt India ſervice, and the other put an end to his own exiſtence.

The mother, after ſhedding a few natural tears, and wiping them ſoon, began to feel her pride and paſſion amply gratified in an abſolute dominion over an eſtate, a manſion-houſe, and a tribe of ſervants, whoſe dependent ſituation made them bear her fury with little reſiſtance. But ſhe enjoyed her reign but a ſhort time; for as her mind was incapable of reſting on itſelf for ſupport; ſhe ſought relief from the bottle of cordial; and, heated one day with a large draught, and a violent paſſion with one of the maids, ſhe burſt a blood veſſel, and expired in a ſcolding fit, her tongue ſtill quivering after her heart had ceaſed its pulſation.

I believe the originals of ſuch a picture as this, are much leſs common in the preſent age, than they were in the laſt century. Ladies were then ſecluded from the world till marriage, and as they were very ſuperficially educated in every thing but potting and preſerving, it is no wonder if they became termagants, ſhrews, or viragos. They had no right ideas of themſelves or the world around them, and yielded, without oppoſition, to thoſe violent emotions, which ariſe perhaps in every mind when it is totally uncultivated. Culture of the underſtanding is, indeed, one of the beſt methods of ſubduing the heart to ſoftneſs, and redeeming it from that ſavage ſtate in which it too often comes from the hands of nature. The more our reaſon is ſtrengthened, the better ſhe is enabled to keep her ſeat on the throne, and to govern thoſe paſſions which were appointed to be her ſubjects; but which too often rebel, and ſucceed in their unnatural revolt. But beſides the effect of mental culture, in calling forth and increaſing the powers of the reaſoning faculty, it ſeems to poſſeſs an influence in humanizing the feelings, and meliorating the native diſpoſition. Muſic, painting, and poetry, teach the mind to ſelect the agreeable parts of thoſe objects which ſurround us, and by habituating it to a pure and permanent delight, gradually ſuperinduce an habitual good-humour. It is of infinite importance to happineſs, that the mind ſhould be accuſtomed from infancy to turn from deformed and painful ſcenes, and to contemplate whatever can be found of moral and natural beauty, The ſpirits, under this benign management, contract a milkineſs, and learn to flow all cheerily in their

ſmooth and yielding channels; while, on the contrary, if the young mind is teaſed, fretted, and neglected, the paſſages of the ſpirits become rugged, abrupt, exaſperated and the whole nervous ſyſtem ſeems to acquire an exceſſive irritability. The ill treatment of children has not only made them wretched at the time, but wretched for life; tearing the fine contexture of their nerves, and roughening, by example, and by ſome ſecret and internal influence, the very conſtitution of their tempers.

So much of the happineſs of private life, and the virtues of mothers and daughters in particular, depends on the government of the temper, that the temper ought to be a principal object of regard in a well-conducted education. The ſuffering of children to tyranniſe, without controul, over ſervants and inferiors, is, I am convinced, the ruin of many an amiable diſpoſition. The virtues of humanity, benevolence, humility, cannot be too early enforced; at the ſame time care ſhould be taken that an infant of two or three years old ſhould never be beaten or ſpoken to harſhly for any offence which it can poſſibly commit. In ſhort, let every method be uſed which reaſon, religion, prudence, and experience, can ſuggeſt, to accompliſh the purpoſe of ſweetening the temper, and baniſhing the furies from ſociety. May the endeavours be ſucceſsful; and may we only read, that there have indeed, been ſuch animals as ſhrews and viragos, but that the breed is extinct in England, like the breed of wolves!

I have been much pleaſed with the lovely picture of Serena, in Mr. Hayley's inſtructive poem, the Triumphs of Temper; and I cannot conclude, without earneſtly entreating the ladies to view it as a looking glaſs, by which they may learn to dreſs their minds in a manner which can never be out of faſhion; but which will enable them to ſecure as well as extend their conqueſts; and to charm, even when the lilies and roſes are all withered. If the poem ſhould effect this very laudable purpoſe, the Virtues, the Muſes, and the Graces, ſhould unite to form a wreath for the poet's brow, and hail him as the reſtorer of a golden age. While every mother, wife, and daughter, aſpires at the virtues, of a Serena, let Alecto, Megæra, and Tiſiphone, be

confined in chains to the infernal regions, and forbidden ever more to arise, and assume the shape of a British lady!

No. CXXIII. ON THE MORAL EFFECTS OF A GOOD TRAGEDY.

IT is with regret I observe, that a taste for the noblest part of theatrical amusements, the representation of tragedy, is rather on the decline. It strongly marks the frivolity of an age, when the buskin is excluded for the sock, and the public attention too much engaged by dancers, singers, and harlequins, to admit the serious, yet lively pleasures of the tragic muse.

There seems to me to be no method more effectual of softening the ferocity, and improving the minds, of the lower classes of a great capital, than the frequent exhibition of tragical pieces, in which the distress is carried to the highest extreme, and the moral at once self-evident, affecting, and instructive. The multitudes of those who cannot read, or if they could, have neither time nor abilities for deriving much advantage from reading, are powerfully impressed, through the medium of the eyes and ears, with those important truths, which, while they illuminate the understanding, correct and mollify the heart. Benevolence, justice, heroism, and the wisdom of moderating the passions, are plainly pointed out, and forcibly recommended to those savage sons of uncultivated nature, who have few opportunities, and would have no inclination for instruction, if it did not present itself under the form of a delightful amusement. The human heart in general, whether it beats in the bosom of him who has been improved by education, or of the neglected child of poverty, is taught to exercise some of its most amiable propensities by the indulgence of commiseration in scenes of fancied woe. Were the theatre under certain regulations, a man might go to it as he goes to church, to learn his duty; and it might justly be honoured with the appellation which it has often assumed, and be called the School of Virtue.

There are certainly a thousand tragedies of more classical merit, but few better calculated to save the numerous and important classes of the plebeian order from wallowing in vice, theft, intemperance, and wretchedness of every kind, than the tragedy of George Barnwell. Common and illiterate minds cannot follow the high flights of sublime poetry, nor understand the beauties of the blank verse; but the language of Lillo, in this humble tale, is level to the lowest degree of intellect. It must, indeed, give pleasure to every friend of unassuming merit, to find the due tribute of applause paid to the modest Lillo by one of the best of all modern judges, the critic and philosopher of Salisbury. He, whose taste was formed on the purest models, and corrected by the strictest rules, has not hesitated to place the Fatal Curiosity in the very first rank of dramatic compositions. And George Barnwell, however it may be affectedly despised by the silly votaries of fashion, who abominate it as low, deserves no less to be esteemd for its moral excellence, than the other for its classical. It has, perhaps, saved as many from an ignominious end, as the Beggar's Opera has hastened to it. That any moralist, or man of observation, can entertain a doubt concerning the effect on the upper gallery, of a play in which thieves and harlots are represented as amiable and innocent characters, and all the rest of society as rogues, evinces, in this instance, an ignorance of human nature. The representation of the Beggar's Opera, is not only an outrage on civilised society, but an extreme act of cruelty to those wretched boys and girls, who have been allured to the paths of destruction, by viewing them thus strewed with artificial flowers.—Take away the disgrace, the shame, and the first fine sensibilities of timid vice, and you remove a restraint, the force of whose operation neither precepts nor laws can ever supply. Suppose a country lad, with all his native modesty about him, allured to the theatre by the Beggar's Opera. In a few hours he undergoes a perfect metamorphosis. He thinks himself illuminated, and despises the honest old folks at home, who have hitherto confined him, as he supposes, in childish ignorance. His perverted ambition takes an unfortunate turn; and if he arrives not at the honour of dying like a

Macheath, he will at leaſt endeavour to deſerve it. Such, I am well aſſured, is often a true caſe; but even the miſerable creatures, who are far gone in the paths which lead through villany to ruin, may be called back by the melancholy tale of poor George Barnwell. There are many other tragedies in the Engliſh language which convey admirable morals to the lower claſſes, and have undoubtedly reſcued many a wretch, who was deaf to a parent's voice and a preacher's admonition, from the dominion of an evil ſpirit.

But, indeed, there is no claſs of the people, however refined and poliſhed, which may not receive ſuch benefits from a well-written tragedy, as ſcarcely any other mode of inſtruction can afford. He who has entered into all the feelings of a Shakeſpeare, an Otway, a Rowe, an Addiſon, may be ſaid to have aſſimilated with their ſouls, and ſnatched a ſacred ſpark, which cannot fail to kindle ſomething in himſelf reſembling the etherial fire of true genius. His nature will be improved, and a ſpecies of wiſdom and elevation of ſpirit, which was in vain ſought for in academic groves, may at laſt be imbibed in the theatres. Philoſophy may catch a warmth of the drama, which is capable of advancing it to nobler heights than ſhe would otherwiſe have attained. Socrates, whoſe benevolence and wiſdom appeared to have ſomething of divinity, was the voluntary aſſiſtant of Euripides in the compoſition of his tragedies; and undoubtedly was of opinion, that he taught philoſophy to inſtruct the herd of mankind in the moſt effectual manner, when he introduced her to their notice in the buſkin.

Inſtructive, entertaining, animating, and ennobling, as is the ſpirit of the tragic muſe, is it not wonderful that many can ſlight its efficacy, or view its fine productions on the ſtage with perfect inſenſibility? Yet, he who ſurveys the ſeats in the theatre, where opulence and faſhion take their place, will find many a painted and powdered figure of both ſexes, which appears to view a Lear, a Shore, a Hamlet, and a Harlequin, with the ſame heavy eye; nor ſhews one emotion, except it be of laughter, while nature is moſt powerfully attracting the ſacred fountain of tears, wherever it has not been cloſed by affectation, by a natural or an acquired ſtupidity. It ſeems indeed to be a part of

the contemptible vanity which characterises the age, to laugh at public spectacles when others are serious, and to be serious when others laugh. "Who, indeed," says the fine-bred lady, "would be sincerely affected by any thing "said or done by the low creatures on the stage?"

Some spectators, on the other hand, lose all the effect of the piece by attending to the indentical men and women who act, rather than to the characters which they represent. They also admire Mr. or Mrs. Such an one's coat, gown, cap, shoe, leg, or hand, but forget the hero and the heroine, the poet and the poem.

The taste for ridicule, which greatly prevails in a mean, selfish, debauched, and trifling age, contributes to prevent the genuine effect of tragedy. Great laughers are seldom susceptible of deep or serious impressions. While the dead lie scattered on the stage, and every thing is presented to the view which ought to excite pity and terror, the joker dissipates the sweet sorrow of sympathy by the introduction of a ludicrous idea. Ridicule, indeed, seems to become a weapon in the hands of the wicked, destructive of taste, feeling, morality, and religion.

The addition of a ludicrous epilogue, a farce, pantomime entertainment, and of dances between the acts, has often been lamented as destructive of the effects of the finest tragedy. It is true, that they who live to please, must please in order to live? and therefore the players and their managers are not culpable. They must not only provide manly amusements for men, but childish diversions for children and school-boys. These entertainments have, indeed, often that ingenuity and drollery in them, which may at a proper season relax the most rigid philosophy. I censure not the things themselves, but the time of their introduction. After the soul has been deeply impressed with serious and virtuous sentiments, it is surely lamentable, that every mark should be effaced by harlequins and buffoons. It must be remembered, that I am speaking only of the moral effects of the drama, and I believe every one will agree, that these would be more successfully produced, if the entertainment, as it is called by way of eminence, preceded the tragedy. The spectator would then retire to his pillow with his fan-

cy full of fine poetic images, and his heart glowing with every elevated idea of moral rectitude. But now his feelings are so trifled with and tantalized, that at last he grows callous to the tenderest pathos, and attends the theatre merely as a critic in acting, instead of an interested partaker in the scenes which pass in review.

In times when manly minds are necessary to save a sinking empire, and retard the decline of a degenerating people, every mode of improving the hearts of the community at large in the serious and severer virtues, ought to be applied with diligence. The theatre opens a fine school for the accomplishment of this end; and it would certainly contribute greatly to accelerate the general improvement, if there were less singing, dancing, and buffoonery, and more tragedy. But some great man, by which epithet I mean, in this place, a titled and fashionable man, must set the example of admiring it, or else all the Muses themselves might rack their inventions in composing the melancholy tale, with no other effect than that of diffusing sleep or smiles throughout pit, box, and gallery.

It is remarkable that, since this paper was published, tragedy has become fashionable. I mean not to claim the merit of producing this change; but I cannot help feeling a satisfaction in it, as it is certainly conducive to national reformation.

No. CXXIV. ON THE INFLUENCE OF POLITICS, AS A SUBJECT OF CONVERSATION, ON THE STATE OF LITERATURE.

IT is a mark of the social and public spirt of this nation, that there is scarcely a member of it who does not bestow a very considerable portion of his time and thoughts in studying its political welfare, its interest and its honour. Though this general taste for politics, from the highest to the lowest orders of the people, has afforded subjects for comic ridicule, yet I cannot help considering it both as proof of uncommon liberality, and as one of the firmest supports of

civil liberty. It kindles and keeps alive an ardent love of freedom. It has hitherto preſerved that glorious gift of God from the rude hand of tyranny, and tends, perhaps, more than any other cauſe, to communicate the noble fire of true patriotiſm to the boſoms of poſterity. While we watch vigilantly over every political meaſure, and communicate an alarm through the empire with a ſpeed almoſt equal to the ſhock of electricity, there will be no danger that a king ſhould eſtabliſh deſpotiſm, even though he were to invade the rights of his people at the head of his ſtanding army.

But as zeal without knowledge is ſubverſive of the purpoſe which it means to promote; it becomes a true friend to his country, to endeavour to unite with the love of liberty the love of knowledge. It unfortunately happens, that political ſubjects are of ſo warm and animating a nature, that they not only appear to intereſt in a very high degree, but to engroſs the attention. The newſpapers form the whole library of the politician, the coffee-houſe is his ſchool, and he prefers the Gazette, and an acrimonious pamphlet for or againſt the miniſtry, to all that was ever written by a Homer, or diſcovered by a Newton.

To be a competent judge, either of political meaſures or events, it is neceſſary to poſſeſs an enlightened underſtanding, and the liberal ſpirit of philoſophy; it is neceſſary to have read hiſtory and to have formed right ideas of the nature of man and of civil ſociety. But I know not how it happens, the moſt ignorant and paſſionate are apt to be the moſt deciſive in delivering their ſentiments on the very complicacated ſubjects of political controverſy. A man, whoſe education never extended beyond writing and the four rules, will determine at once, and with the moſt authoritative air, ſuch queſtions as would perplex the wiſeſt ſtateſman adorned with all human learning, and aſſiſted by the experience and advice of the moſt cultivated perſons in the nation. Even gentlemen, according to the common acceptation of that title, or thoſe who have fortunes, and have received the common inſtruction of the times, are ſeldom able to judge with propriety in politics, though they are uſually inclined to dictate with paſſion. Is it poſſible, that, from having

learnt only the first elements of Latin and French, and the arts of dancing, fencing, and fiddling, in perfection, a man should be qualified, I do not say to sit as a senator, but to expatiate, with sufficient judgment and intelligence, on the propriety and nature of any public transaction or system of government? But he is worth an estate of a thousand a year, and therefore, though all his other merit, in kind and degree, may be like that of a master of the ceremonies, or that of a skilful groom and whipper-in, he thinks he has a right to give law to the neighbourhood in political conversation. His ideas are confined to narrow limits; and as his patriotism is for the most part spite, so his support of a ministry is, in some respects, self-interest. It must be so; for a man, whose mind is not enlarged and cultivated, cannot entertain so liberal a system of opinions as those of real patriotism.

But even among persons whose minds are sufficiently improved to distinguish and pursue the good of man and of society, independently either of passion or of private advantage, the rage for politics often proceeds too far, and absorbs all other objects. In vain does the hand of art present the picture, or repeat the melody of music; for the eye is blind, the ear is deaf to all but the news and the newspaper. Poetry, philology, elegant and polite letters, in all their ramifications, display their alluring charms in vain to him, whose head and heart still vibrate with the harsh and discordant sounds of a political dispute at the tavern. Those books whose tendency is only to promote elegant pleasures or advance science, which flatter no party, and gratify no malignant passion, are suffered to fall into oblivion; while a pamphlet, which espouses the cause of any political men or measures, however inconsiderable its literary merit, is extolled as one of the first productions of modern literature. But meagre is the food furnished to the mind of man by the declamation of a party bigot. From a taste for trash, and a disrelish of the wholesome food of the mind, and from the consequent neglect of solid learning, mere politicians are prevented from receiving valuable improvement; and the community, together with literature, is at last deeply injured. For when learning is little respected, it will natural-

ly decline; and that the mental darkneſs conſequent on its decline, leads to the eſtabliſhment of deſpotiſm, every one who has ſurveyed the pictures of mankind, as pourtrayed by the pencil of hiſtory, will immediately acknowledge. What did Athens and Rome retain of their ancient dignity when their learning and their arts were no more? That the light of learning ſhould ever again be extinguiſhed, may appear a viſionary idea to an Engliſhman; but ſo it did to a Roman in the days of Cicero. Notwithſtanding the multiplication of books by the art of printing, both they, and all value for them, may vaniſh together with the power of underſtanding them, if the fury of politics ſhould occaſion a contempt for letters and for education, and ſhould convert the leaders of a people into Goths and Vandals.

He who would add an elegance to politics, and diſtinguiſh his converſation on the ſubject from the vociferation of porters in an alehouſe, ſhould inſpect the finiſhed pieces of antiquity, and learn to view public acts and councils in the light in which they appear to thoſe whom the world has long conſidered as ſome of the beſt and politeſt teachers of political wiſdom. If he poſſeſſes not taſte enough to reliſh the works of poetical imagination, let him confine himſelf to ſuch authors as Thucydides and Xenophon, Polybius and Plutarch, Livy and Salluſt. Politics will aſſume new grace by communicating with hiſtory and philoſophy; and political converſation, inſtead of a vague, paſſionate, and declamatory effuſion of undigeſted ideas, will become a moſt liberal exerciſe of the faculties, and form a mental banquet, at which the beſt and wiſeſt of mankind might indulge their finer appetites with inſatiable avidity. What can conſtitute a more rational object of contemplation than the noble fabric of ſociety, civilized by arts, letters, and religion? What can better employ our ſagacity, than to deviſe modes for its improvement and preſervation?

Not only the underſtanding, the taſte, the temper of a people, but the ſpirit alſo, will be greatly improved by learning politics of the Greeks and Romans. No man of feeling ever yet read Livy without learning to deteſt ſlavery, and to glow with a love and emulation of public virtue. The

Greek and Roman ſpirit cannot be too much encouraged by thoſe who have a juſt idea of the dignity of a true Engliſhman, and deſire to maintan it. And let it be remembered, that the Athenians, in their moſt glorious periods, were as much attached to politics and news as Britons ever were; but that they preſerved, amidſt the warmeſt conteſt, a refined taſte and delicate paſſion for the politeſt learning and the profoundeſt philoſophy.

No. CXXV. ON BUFFOONERY IN CONVERSATION.

IT is ſweet, ſays the agreeable poet of Venuſium, to lay aſide our wiſdom, and to indulge on a proper occaſion, a ſpecies of temporary folly. He, indeed, muſt be outrageouſly ſevere, who would prohibit any pleaſing mode of paſſing our leiſure hours, while it is conſiſtent with innocence, and the nature of a being eminently diſtinguiſhed by the fine faculties of reaſon, fancy, memory, and reflection. Charming is the ſocial hour when ſolidity of judgment is enlivened by brilliancy of wit, and the lively ſallies of imagination by a ſweet interchange of penſive gravity. Eaſe, freedom, and the unſtudied effuſion of the ſentiments which naturally ariſe in the cultivated minds, form a very delightful recreation; and diſmiſs the mind to its ſerious employments with new alacrity. Thoſe among the ancients, who were moſt celebrated for their wiſdom, were remarkable for a cheerful and equable gaiety, and often diverted themſelves in their intervals of ſeverer meditation, with jeſts, and drollery. Who more cheerful than the gentle Socrates? Who more delighted with a joke than the dignified Cicero? But, at the ſame time, they were equally capable of maintaining a legitimate converſation in all its gravity and elegance. The converſations of Socrates, preſerved by his eloquent diſciples, breathe a wiſdom approaching to divine; and Cicero's book *de Oratore*, is one of the nobleſt monuments of publiſhed urbanity, as are many of his philoſophical pieces of ſpeculative wiſdom.

But there prevails, at preſent, a taſte for low and noiſy

mirth, which totally precludes all delicacy of sentiment, all exercise of reason and invention, and almost degrades us to the level of those ludicrous animals, whom nature has rendered so wonderfully expert in the art of mimicry. Many persons, who imagine themselves remarkably endowed with humour, and the power of delighting whatever company they deign to bless with their presence, are apt to give their tongues a licence to wander without the reins of judgment; to affect uncommon expressions, attitudes, grimaces, and modes of address and behaviour; and to imagine, that oddity is humour, eccentricity wit, downright nonsense prodigiously droll, and rudeness infinitely entertaining. If the company are as foolish as the pretended wit; or, indeed, if they are very polite and good-natured, they seldom refuse the easy tribute of a laugh, either real or affected; and the joker, animated by his fancied encouragement, proceeds in his extravagant sallies, till his assumed folly approaches very nearly to real idiotism. In the mean time, as he draws the attention of the company on himself, and engrosses all the time and talk, he not only lowers himself, but prevents others from rising; relaxes the tone of his own mind, and of all around, to a state of imbecillity, and at once prevents the opportunity and the power of uttering a single idea worth remembrance. Noise and laughter are but meagre food for the mind; and however pleased people may appear, they commonly retire from the company in which these have formed the only entertainment, with an unsatisfied and uneasy vacuity, with disgust and disagreeable reflection.

It very often happens, that these facetious gentlemen rely upon more expeditious methods of becoming *prodigiously entertaining*, than any thing which requires utterance. They enter a room, and sit down gravely, with their wigs on one side, or with the back part of it over their forehead. They take great delight in the practical joke; and if they can pick your pocket of your handkerchief, smut your face, draw your chair from under you, or make you a fool, as they call it, they consider themselves as other Yoricks, and as fellows of infinite humour, endowed with peculiar talents for setting the table on a roar. It might, indeed, be said with truth, that they literally make fools of themselves, and

appear ambitious of supplying that order which was once very common, but is now either a little out of fashion, or introduced in disguise; I mean the order of professed and hireling fools, for the amusement of the nobility. It has indeed been jocularly said, that many of the nobility in the present age execute the office in their own persons to save expence.

Now, though there were nothing criminal in buffoonery, yet as it tends, when too long continued, to exclude all attention to any thing serious, and to divest conversation of its power of affording improvement as well as pleasure, it is certainly to be wished that it were, in some measure, restrained. I say restrained only; for I do not know any just reason why any method of innocently amusing the mind, during a short interval of inaction, should be utterly forbidden. Man is an animal that delights in variety; mirth and mimicry, jest and jollity, *quips and cranks and wanton wiles, and laughter holding both his sides*, are certainly no less allowable as the means of relaxation, than cards, backgammon, billiards, and the bottle. He is wise who requires moderation in all these indulgences; but he who inveighs against any of them in the gross, and without exception, has taken a false estimate of human nature, and is not to be considered a a moralist, but as a declaimer. If any one rule will admit of universal application, it is that which directs us to observe the golden mean.

I could never admire the wisdom of certain self-elected legislators of graceful behaviour, who seem to forbid us to laugh, with much greater strictness than they would have prohibited the violation of the decalogue. To be remarkable for laughing, is not only ungraceful, but a sign of folly. But God has distinguished man by the power of risibility, and there is no reason why he should not exercise it on proper occasions; and, perhaps, there would be no occasion more proper, than when a disciplined fop shews by his behaviour, that he prefers the varnish of external grace to honour and to honesty.

Wit, it has been said, does not naturally excite laughter. But this observation, though true in part, is not universally true; for wit, united with humour, possesses such a com-

mand of the risible muscles, that he must be a stoic, or a very ill-natured man, who is able to resist the impulse. I should, indeed, have no favourable opinion of that man's heart or disposition, who could be present at a truly comic scene, without laying aside his severity, and shaking his sides with as much glee as the ingenious child of nature. And if it is a weakness not to be able to refrain from laughter at a ludicrous object, it is a weakness of all others the most pardonable; and it is surely better to be weak than malignant. But, in truth, the weakness consists only in laughing immoderately, or frequently without an adequate object.

In every convivial meeting of elegant and polished company, the Muses and the Graces should be of the party. The first honours and attention should be paid to them; but let not Comus and Jocus be forbidden to follow in their train, and under their command. The entertainment will be thus heightened and varied, and good sense and decorum derive new lustre from good-humour. We would, indeed, restrain that excessive and rude mirth which originates in levity and folly, and becomes what is called buffoonery; but far be it from us to banish that sprightliness which naturally results from the gaiety of innocence. Joy, while we are blessed with health and ease, and what the stoics call EUROIA, or the well flowing of the stream of life, is gratitude and obedience.

No. CXXVI. ON THE STYLE OF XENOPHON AND PLATO.

WRITERS, who have displayed any of that uniform peculiarity in their style which renders it easily imitable, however popular they may become at their first appearance, by gratifying the passion for novelty, are by no means the most perfect writers; but are to be classed with those artists of the pencil, whom the painters distinguish by the appellation of Manneristes. Simplicity of diction as it is one of the most engaging beauties, is also one of the most difficult to imitate. It exhibits no prominency of feature,

but displays one whole, properly embellished with a thousand little graces, no one of which obtrudes itself in such a manner as to destroy the appearance of a perfect symmetry. In this species of excellence Xenophon is confessedly a model. He has been called the Attic Muse and the Attic Bee. It has been said, that the Muses would express themselves in his language, that his style is sweeter than honey, that the Graces themselves appear to have assisted in its formation; but though all this praise is justly due, yet it would be difficult to point out any one beauty which recurs so often in the same form, as to characterise his composition.

But the numerous writers who have imitated the Rambler, or the Adventurer, are discovered in their affectation, before the reader has perused a single page. The very peculiar manner of those excellent performances has been easily imitated by inferior writers, and more easily caricatured. Addison is simple and natural, and, consequently, has not been often mimicked with equal success. Indeed, the nearer we approach to the manner of Addison, the more agreeable is our style; but, I believe, none ever admired the style of the Rambler, but in the hands of its original author. The satirical writer of Lexiphanes easily rendered it ridiculous: and though in some of Aikin's prosaic pieces, there is a very serious and good imitation of it, yet we are rather disposed to smile than admire. Affectation always borders on burlesque; but a manner, which derives its graces from nature, cannot be rendered ridiculous. The style of Xenophon, like the philosopher, whom he records, is proof against the sportive and malignant buffoonery of an Aristophanes.

It is however certain, that every beauty cannot be combined under one form. If the style of Xenophon displays grace, ease, and sweetness, it is deficient in magnificence in weight, in authority, and in dignity. But it should be remembered, that the Venus of Medici is not to be censured because it wants the nerves and muscles of the Farnesian Hercules. It appears to me, however, that though some of the most popular writers in England yield to Xenophon in the softer graces, they greatly excel him in masculine beauty. The authors of the Rambler, of the Adventurer, and some of

their imitators, will be found to poſſeſs a ſuperiority in this reſpect, on a fair compariſon. Indeed, if there were more ſingularities and deviations from ſimplicity than are to be found in thoſe volumes, their excellent ſenſe and fine morality ought to exalt their authors to a degree of honour, far ſuperior to any which can be derived from a ſkill in compoſition.

According to the opinions of the beſt judges, ancient and modern, the greateſt maſter of the beauties of ſtyle whom the world ever ſaw, was the divine Plato. The ancients heſitated not to aſſert, in the zeal of their admiration, that if Jupiter were to ſpeak in the language of Greece, he would infallibly expreſs himſelf in the diction of Plato. He poſſeſſed the art of combining ſeverity with grace, and ſweetneſs with grandeur; and to him we owe a ſimilar combination in the great orator and philoſopher of Rome, who formed his ſtyle on the model of Plato; and has given us a reſemblance ſcarcely leſs exact than that of the buſt to its mould, or the waxen ſeal to the ſculptured gem.

The introductions to the dialogues of Cicero are always peculiarly beautiful; ſo alſo are thoſe of Plato. It is agreeable to call to mind the ſweet ſpot which Plato repreſents as the ſcenes where the dialogues paſſed, in language no leſs delightful than the ſcene itſelf.

The river Iliſſus glided over the pebbles in a clear ſtream, but ſo ſhallow that you might have walked through it without any great inconvenience. At a ſmall diſtance roſe a tall plane-tree, ſpreading its broad foliage to a conſiderable diſtance, and flouriſhing in all the mature luxuriance of ſummer beauty. At the root of the tree iſſued a ſpring, dedicated to Achelous and the Nymphs, and remarkable for its cool and limpid water. The ſofteſt herbage grew round its little banks, the verdure of which was rendered perpetual by the refreſhing moiſture of the ſpring, as it flowed down a gentle declivity. A ſweet and cooling breeze generally breathed along the ſhade, and great numbers of cicadæ, taking ſhelter from the ſun, reſorted to the coverts, and made an agreeable kind of natural muſic with their little notes, which ſeldom ceaſed. Plato adds ſeveral other agreeable heightenings of the ſcene, in which moral and philoſo-

phical beauty was taught to emulate the beauties of nature. The language of Plato adds charms to the whole, as variegated colours illuminate and embellish the plain sketches of the chalk or penciled outline.

It is no wonder that philosophy, recommended by such graces as these, was found to render her votaries enamoured. Virtue and public spirit can scarcely ever want their admirers and followers, when they are decorated in a manner which sets off their own loveliness to the greatest advantage. It is to be lamented, for the sake of virtue, that lord Shaftsbury was a sceptic. His style was a fine imitation of Plato, and displays such beauties as might conceal the ugliness of a deformed system. Mr. Harris has also exhibited the Platonic graces in high perfection; and I cannot help considerig it as a mark of defective taste that he is not more popular. His style appears to be one of the most elegant, classical, and judiciously ornamented among all the English writers of the present century. They who have raised their taste so as to perceive its beauties, will consider the style of many writers, whom they once admired, as comparatively barbarous. He who never tasted the pine-apple, the peach, and the nectarine, may probably suppose that he enjoys the most exquisite flavour of the fruit-garden while he is feasting on a pippin; as he, who never partook of the pippin, may devour a crab, and admire it as a delicacy.

A critic of antiquity, Dionysius the Halicarnassian, has discovered many and great faults in the style of Plato. He seems to think the epithets too poetical, the metaphors too bold, the matter too allegorical. Pompey the Great disputed the point with him: and there is a curious letter extant on the subject, from the critic to the statesman. It is, indeed, obvious to remark, that, though Plato would not admit Homer into his republic, he has admitted many of his beauties into his style; and has often written with an enthusiastic warmth, which they, who have not partaken of the afflatus to which he somewhere pretended, cannot entirely approve. A cold critic, like Dionysius, would naturally be disgusted with it; but we cannot listen to his censures of a noble genius, who snatched graces beyond the reach of art; whom Pompey approved, and whom Tully

almoſt idolized. When ſpecimens of perfect compoſition were to be pointed out, the choice has fallen on the Georgics of Virgil, and the Menexenus of Plato.

Both Xenophon and Plato diſplay what is more valuable than all verbal elegance, a fine ſyſtem of morality, which long ſhone forth in the world as a light unequalled, till the ſun of revelation aroſe. If Xenophon's memoirs were diveſted of a few ſuperfluities and a few abſurdities, I ſhould not fear to aſſert, that they approach very near to the goſpel, in the exhibition of inſtructive leſſons, and a ſublime, yet encouraging example of all human excellence; for, with reſpect to the calumnies advanced againſt Socrates, they undoubtedly originated from the father of lies. And thoſe writers are to be eſteemed the enemies to human virtue and happineſs, who employ their ingenuity in detracting from illuſtrious and eſtabliſhed reputation.

No. CXXVII. ON THE ADVANTAGES DERIVABLE FROM NATIONAL ADVERSITY.

IT is very certain, that national proſperity, as it is comprehended in the idea of numerous fleets and armies, of extenſive empire, large revenues, advantageous commerce, and a profuſion of money in ſpecie, is a kind of good by no means neceſſarily connected with moral good, or with the ſubſtantial happineſs of individuals. It makes a ſplendid figure in imagination's eye; but to reaſon, it appears in a very queſtionable ſhape, and experience is able to evince, that it has always diffuſed profligacy and miſery through the walks of private life; and, by introducing luxury, licentiouſneſs, indolence, and corruption, has at once deſtroyed all that can render human nature dignified and happy, and precipitated the decline and the downfal of empires, while triumphing in fancied glory.

It has been obſerved, that the bodies politic and natural bear to each other a remarkable analogy. A human form pampered, bloated, and plethoric, will often have the appearance of ſtrength, as well as magnitude; though no ſtate

of it can be less adapted to facilitate the animal movements, or in greater danger of a hasty dissolution. The body politic also loses in muscular force, as much as it acquires of unwieldy size, till, by the gradual decrease of vigour, and augmentation of weight, it totters on its baseless supports, and, at last, lies level with the dust with Babylon and ancient Rome. Luxury, the inevitable consequence of what is falsely called national prosperity, becomes the grave of empires, and of all that could adorn them, or render their long duration a rational object of desire.

There is, undoubtedly, a certain degree of magnitude at which when a state is arrived, it must of necessity undergo the alternative, of being purged of its peccant humours, or falling into a nerveless languor and consequent decline. Perhaps our own country has already arrived at that degree, and is now, under the operation of Divine Providence, suffering the amputation of its morbid excrescences for the salvation of its health and existence. It may lose some of its revenues; but it will save and meliorate its morals and its liberty. Ministers may be shaken from their seats, pensioners and placemen may be reduced to despair, funds may be annihilated, and estates brought down to their natural value; but freedom, but virue, but industry, but the British constitution, but human nature, shall survive the wreck, and emerge, like silver and gold when tried by the fire, with new value and additional lustre. After a state of political adversity, something may take place in the society, similar to the expected renovation of all things, after the general conflagration of the universe.

Distress and difficulty are known to operate in private life as the spurs of diligence. Powers, which would for ever have lain dormant in the halcyon days of ease and plenty have been called forth by adversity, and have advanced their possessor to the most enviable heights of virtue, happiness, and glory. Man is naturally indolent, and when undisturbed, will bask and sleep in the sunshine till the sleep of death; but, when roused by the blast and the thunder, he rises, strains every sinew, and marches on to enterprise. Success will almost infallibly attend great exertions uniformly and resolutely continued; so that what begun in

misery ends in triumph, as the sun which rose in a mist descends with serenity, and paints the whole horizon with gold and purple.

Public industry may be excited in the same manner, and in the same degree, by public misfortunes. The nation is impoverished, or, in other words, its superfluities are retrenched. It is an event devoutly to be wished. Luxury, with ten thousand evils in her train, is obliged to withdraw, and the humble virtues, whom she had driven by her insolence into exile, cheerfully advance from their concealment. Industry and frugality take the lead; but to what a degree of vigour must every muscle of the body politic be braced, when every member is, in some measure, actuated by industry and frugality. No man ever yet exerted himself to the utmost of his strength; nor is it on record, that any state was ever yet so exhausted, but that while it enjoyed liberty, it might draw new resources for its own vitals. Though the tree is lopped, yet, o long as the root remains unhurt, it will throw out a greater luxuriancy of branches, produce fruit of better flavour, and derive fresh vigour from the axe. If one has accidentally disturbed an ant-hill, or broken the fabric of the hive, though the little animals appeared before to have exerted their utmost efforts, yet it is amazing, with what additional diligence they apply themselves to repair the depredation. Not a moment is allowed for despondency. The earth and the air glow with motion, and the misfortune seems immediately to add to their spirits, and, ultimately, both to their store and security.

The beautiful description which Virgil has given us of the busy scene in which the Tyrians are engaged in building Carthage, represents, in a most lively manner, the alacrity with which human creatures are found to exert themselves, when instigated by the stimulus of necessity. An emulation of labour seizes every bosom. No murmuring, no complainings in the street, but every one feels himself happy, in proportion as he renders himself useful. Men's abilities rise with the occasion; and political evil, like other evil, under the conduct of a merciful Deity, has produced extensive good, by calling forth some of the noblest exerti-

ous, and moſt perfect characters which have adorned the records of human nature.

There is one beneficial effect of national adverſity, of greater importance than any which I have enumerated. It ſubdues the haughty ſoul elevated with riches, and inebriated with exceſs, and turns the attention to the King of kings, the Lord of Lords, the only Ruler of princes, who from his throne beholds all nations, and bids the ſceptre to depart from the wicked to the righteous. It teaches us to rely leſs upon our German auxiliaries, our muſquets, our mortars, our cannon, our copper-bottomed men of war, our generals, and our admirals, than on the Lord of Hoſts. When he fights for us we ſhall conquer. Without him, we ſhall in vain put our truſt in a Burgoyne, a Keppel, or a Cornwallis; but "the ball of empire ſhall continue to "roll on weſtward as it has ever yet done, till it ſtops in "America, a world unknown to the ancients, and which "may ſave the tears of ſome future Alexander."

If Providence ſhall have decreed the downfal of Britiſh ſupremacy, happy ſhould I be to have ſuggeſted one idea which may ſtimulate the exertions of my countrymen, once more to raiſe the noble column on the baſis of liberty and virtue; or which may conſole them on its ruins; and teach them, while they ſit by the waters of bitterneſs, and hang their harps on the willow, to think of Him who can make rivers of comfort to flow in the dreary deſert.

No. CXXVIII. ON SOME OF THE FALSE PRETENSIONS AND IMPOSITIONS OF THE ARTFUL AND AVARICIOUS.

NOTWITHSTANDING the pretenſions of religion, philoſophy, and education, the greater part of mankind appears to be reſtrained in their actual conduct by few efficient principles, but thoſe which are dictated by a regard to intereſt. To the love of gain, and the weakneſs or want of principles, it muſt be imputed, that every occupation and department of life abounds with impoſture. A

maſque is eaſily put on. Appearances are, indeed, far more eaſily aſſumed than realities; and they are often more ſucceſsful and more plauſible; for the edifice of one, who employs all his time and attention in gilding, painting, and carving the front, will much ſooner attract the notice and applauſe of the paſſenger, than that of another who has been ſolicitous only in ſecuring the ſtrength of the beam, and the maſſy firmneſs of a deep foundation.

So powerful are the inſtigations of avarice, and ſo eaſy is it to deceive the young, the ſimple, the innocent, and unſuſpecting, that the intercourſe among mankind would have been one uniform commerce of deceit, if it had not fortunately happened, that the ſame want of principle and ſuperfluity of ſelfiſhneſs, which led the deceivers to impoſe upon mankind, induced them alſo to betray the arts of each other. Rival cheats, in the fury of jealous competition, have diſcovered the ſecrets of the juggling art, and opened the eyes of the deluded obſervers.

But, as there is always a riſing generation unacquainted with the ſnares of the deceitful, nets and traps are ſtill laid wherever there is a probability of prey. It becomes thoſe then, who have ſeen many of the arts of life, to let others profit by their experience, and prevent the generous game from falling into the hands of the mercenary poacher.

It may be preſcribed as a rule which will not often fail in the application, that where extraordinary pretenſions are made, either in the manual arts, the trades, or the profeſſions, there is juſt ground for caution and ſuſpicion. Solid merit, and real excellence of every kind, uſually confide in their own power of recommending themſelves, while ignorance, and ſuperficial ſkill, naturally endeavour to enſnare by cunning what they cannot earn by deſert. There is a delicacy and ſpirit attendant on real worth and ingenuity, which had rather be without ſucceſs, than attain it by artifice and arrogant pretenſion.

The prudent and experienced are generally on their guard againſt thoſe numerous adventurers, who rely for ſucceſs on advertiſements in the public papers. If there is any difference between the mercer, haberdaſher, or wine-merchant, who advertiſes his goods, and him who does not, it

is, that the advertiſer ſells, at a dearer price, a worſe commodity. His ſhop is a kind of trap, the bait is pretended cheapneſs; and many a young bird is caught with the chaff of a bargain. A wiſe man will take care not to lay out his money when things are to be ſold at prime coſt, and under prime coſt, and twenty *per cent.* cheaper than the reſt of the trade. Beware of theſe generous ſpirits, who ſell their property, or their induſtry, *pro publico bono;* beware, as you value your health and your life, of thoſe who will cure you of all diſeaſes with a five ſhilling pill-box; beware of being poiſoned by the vintner, who promiſes you neat as imported; which words being interpreted, ſignify a liquor in which not a drop of grape juice or foreign ſpirits is to be found. Beware of your purſe and your credulity, when you are offered to be taught more of the languages and ſciences by a new method, in ſix months, ſix weeks, or ſix hours, than thoſe who preſide over ſchools can teach in ſix or ſixteen years. Beware of a thouſand artful tricks which are diſplayed in the newſpapers, and which the deceitful heart of man contrives, as the ſpider weaves his web, to catch thoſe who are unſuſpecting, becauſe they are innocent. The true meaning of all pompous pretences, and inviting advertiſements, is, that their authors being diſtreſſed, and, probably, deſtitute both of character, friends, and merit, find an eaſy mode of ſupplying the defect, by digging pitfalls for the unwary, with whom the world muſt always abound, at the expence of a few ſhillings for every ſnare. Such, indeed, is the credulity of mankind, that many a quack and pretender has poſſeſſed an eſtate in the corner of a newſpaper, equal to large freeholds of dirty acres.

There are few departments in which more inſtances of deception occur, than in the lower walks of literature. It happens, that they who are to be mechanically inſtrumental in diſſeminating ſcience and philoſophy, and all the productions of human wit, conſtitute a very numerous body, conſiſting of many members in extreme indigence, from the author by trade, down to the book-binder and the devil. Employment muſt be provided for them all, or both they and their families muſt want bread. The preſs muſt, therefore, be conſtantly in motion; but what is to ſupply it?

A very few preſſes would be ſufficient to prepare for the public view all productions really new and neceſſary. Compilations are formed under a thouſand ſhapes and diſguiſes; and men of ſtraw, adorned with Doctors degrees, and the dignity of Fellows of the Royal Society, are created by the fiat of the adventurous publiſher, and ſtand forth as the renowned authors, in all the dignity of a title-page. From theſe powerful men in buckram iſſue Grand and Imperial Bibles, new Syſtems of Geography, Hiſtories of England, and Collections of Voyages, with permiſſion to read the firſt number, and return it if not approved, and a promiſſory note, generouſly engaging that all numbers, exceeding a certain amount, ſhall be given *gratis*. But if any deceit can be excuſed, perhaps it is ſuch an one as this, which feeds the hungry, clothes the naked, and communicates much entertaining and uſeful knowledge among the poor.

There are thoſe who call far leſs honeſt arts than theſe, innocent frauds; but it is well remarked by a very ſound moraliſt, that no frauds are innocent; becauſe they deſtroy the confidence of ſociety, on which our happineſs and convenience in every part of our intercourſe with each other, greatly depend. I will venture to add, that he who will cheat without remorſe in one thing, will cheat in another whenever he can do it with equal ſecrecy and impunity. Though tricks in trade, or the deceitful myſteries of a profeſſion, may enable a man to raiſe a capital houſe of buſineſs, to be in a great way, or to become a good man, as the phraſes are in the city, yet they can never be compatible with common honeſty, nor render him more truly reſpectable, than the humbler adventurer who actually invades your purſe or rifles your pocket.

No. CXXIX. ON THE PREVAILING TASTE IN POETRY.

SWEET poeſy! thou loveliеſt object of intellectual purſuit.——But I am running into raptures, when I intended a cool diſſertation. It is, indeed, difficult not to be tranſported beyond the limits of criticiſm, in contemplating

the beauties which the magic hand of the poet raiſes around, with all the creative power of a real enchantment. From the cares of gain, the toils of ambition, the noiſe, the hurry, the vexation of a diſordered world, we riſe on the wings of poeſy to etherial regions, where all is ſublime and tranquil; or are wafted to viſionary ſcenes, in which are diſplayed all the delicious ſweets of a paradiſe and an elyſium. Away, ye ſordid objects; ye pollutions and incumbrances of the pure ſpirit! Man is not tied down to you. Providence, in compaſſion to wretched mortals, has given them a power of forſaking this low orb, and ſoaring awhile, all mind, all ſpirit, all extacy, in the car of the ſwan, on the wings of the eagle.

Reaſon alone, with all her pretenſions, is ſeldom ſufficient to ſooth our cares and compoſe our paſſions; but melody and fancy united with her, are capable of pouring balm into the wounded heart. In all nations, and in all ranks of the people, ſome ſpecies of poetry has been cultivated; and a taſte for it was undoubtedly implanted in our nature, that the ſore evils of reality might often be alleviated by the ſweets of fiction. When Pandora's box was opened on mankind, and miſery diffuſed on every ſide, fancy, as well as hope, kindly lingered for our conſolation.

While we are tracing the love of ſong from the favoured iſles of the Southern Ocean to the regions of Iceland, we are naturally tempted to dwell, with particular attention, on the poetical taſte of our own country and our own times.

I think it is not difficult to perceive, that the admirers of Engliſh poetry are divided into two parties. The objects of their love are, perhaps, of equal beauty, though they greatly differ in their air, their dreſs, the turn of their features, and their complexion. On one ſide, are the lovers and imitors of Spenſer and Milton; and on the other, thoſe of Dryden, Boileau, and Pope.

Now it happens, unfortunately, that thoſe who are in love with one of theſe forms are, ſometimes, ſo blind to the charms of the other, as to diſpute their exiſtence. The author of the Eſſay on Pope, who is himſelf a very agreeable poet, and of what I call the old ſchool of Engliſh poe-

try, seems to deny the justice of Mr. Pope's claim to the title of a true poet, and to appropriate to him the subordinate character of a satirical versifier. On the other hand, the authors of the Traveller, and of the Lives of the English Poets, hesitate not to strip the laurels from the brow of the lyric Gray.

Goldsmith, in his Life of Parnell, has invidiously compared the Night piece on Death to Gray's Elegy; and, in a manner which betrays a little jealousy of a living poet's fame, given the preference to Parnell. There is also a severe censure thrown on the elegy, in a collection which Goldsmith published under the title of the Beauties of English Poetry. I remember to have heard Goldsmith converse, when I was very young, on several subjects of literature, and make some oblique and severe reflections on the fashionable poetry. I became a convert to his opinion, because I revered his authority. I took up the odes of Gray with unfavourable prepossessions, and in writing my remarks on them, joined in the censure. I have since read them with great delight, and on comparing their style, and even their obscurity, with many of the finest pieces of lyric composition in all antiquity, I find a very great resemblance. I am not ashamed to retract my former opinion, and to pay the tribute of applause to those elegant friends, Gray and Mason. At the same time, while it is easy to discern that they differ greatly from the school of Driden and Pope, it is no derogation from their merit to assert, that they are the genuine disciples of Spenser and Milton. Such also are the very elegant and learned brothers, one of whom presides, with so much honour, over the school at Winchester, and the other has written an elegant and elaborate history of that English poetry in which himself excels, and which has at last crowned him with the laurel.

Goldsmith's Traveller is certainly a beautiful poem, and so are Dr. Johnson's Imitations of Juvenal; but they, and a thousand others of the same species, are of a different stamp from the English antique. They are excellent productions in one kind, but not less so, are those of Gray and Mason in another. Let both schools flourish and receive their due applause, nor let those who have only acquired a taste for

one, treat the other with contempt. Spenſer and Milton drew not from a Gothic model, but from the poliſhed Italians, who, though they had loſt ſome of the purity and ſimplicity of ancient Rome, yet retained much of her elegance. I cannot help thinking that his poetical ideas are confined, who has not obſerved with delight, the ſweet lines, the ſweet language, the ſweet fancy of Spenſer; and who has not been alſo charmed with the ſmaller pieces of Milton. All taſtes, however various, allow Shakeſpeare's claim to poetry; but it cannot be denied, that ſome of his beſt deſcriptions, and eſpecially of thoſe delicious morſels which occur in the form of ſongs or ſonnets, partake much more of the ancient than of the modern ſchool, either Engliſh or French; for we may call it Engliſh, if we attribute its origin to Pope, and French, if to Boileau.

There ſeems to be an unreaſonable prejudice entertained againſt blank verſe, by thoſe who wiſh to dictate on the ſubjects of criticiſm. It is ſufficient in the idea of many, to condemn a poem, that is written in blank verſe. Though one may prefer rhyme upon the whole; yet, as blank verſe is ſuſceptible of great variety of muſic, and of every ornament of diction, it is ſurely abſurd to involve it in any general cenſure. It may, however, be attributed to this idle prepoſſeſſion, that Mr. Maſon's Engliſh Garden ſeems to be neglected. There is, indeed, a general prejudice againſt all works which appear to come from that ſchool, and the very ſevere criticiſms of the late biographical preface to the works of Gray, will, perhaps contribute to explode a moſt delightful ſtyle of pure poetry; of poetry converſant ſolely in the regions of fancy, and clothed in a luminous and muſical diction appropriated to itſelf, and moſt remote from all that is proſaic. Very high commendations are due to Mr. Anſtey, to the author of a poetical epiſtle to Sir William Chambers, to Mr. Hayley, and to ſeveral others who are well known to fame for their ſucceſsful labours in the ſchool of Pope; but at leaſt an equal ſhare of praiſe ought to be paid to the ſcholars of Milton and Spenſer;—ſuch as Mr. Maſon, and the two poetical brothers. With reſpect to Gray, he has received his tribute of applauſe from a diſcerning public, and has certainly deſerved it. The heart and the imagination

have given it him; and they who can see no beauty in his verse, may perhaps succeed in writing a lampoon, but would probably fall far short of the poet whom they censure, in lyric and elegiac poetry.

None can entertain a higher veneration for our late prefatory biographer of the poets than myself, and I was therefore greatly concerned to see him exposed to censure by an uncandid, not to say injudicious, piece of criticism on the poems of Gray. He indeed allows the merit of the elegy, but examines and censures the odes with every appearance of wanton malignity. Who but must lament that the solid critic and moralist should have been so much under the influence of envy and jealousy, as to treat the fame of his cotemporary, the illustrious Gray, with singular harshness, in a work which contains very candid accounts of a Sprat and a Yalden, a Duke and a Broome, and of others, with whom if Gray is compared, he will appear, as Shakespeare says, like Hyperion to a Satyr.

The late collection of poets has restored to temporary life many a sickly and dying poet, who was hastening to his proper place, the tomb of oblivion. Why was any more paper wasted on Dorset, Halifax, Stepney, Walsh, and Blackmore? How can a work pretend to the comprehensive title of the Body of English poetry, in which the works of and Spenser Shakespeare are omitted to make room for such writers as King or Ambrose Philips? The writer of the prefaces is, indeed, sufficiently willing to throw the blame from himself on the compilers, whom he was not permitted, or did not endeavour to controul. A selection, formed under the direction of true taste, would have answered the two great ends of the publication, which it has now frustrated; it would have amply paid the booksellers, and reflected honour on English literature. Then should we have seen, in the place of Roscommon and Rochester, Pomfret and Fenton, the works of Goldsmith, of Glover, of Mason, of Aikin, of Carter, of Beattie, of the Wartons, of Anstey, and of many others, who would shine among the Hughs's, Pitt's and Savages, like the moon among the diminished constellations.

Upon the many and excellent living writers of poetry we

may obſerve, that though the diſtreſsful times of war and political animoſity are unfavourable to the gentle arts of verſe; yet the active and poliſhed genius of this nation ſeems capable of ſurmounting all obſtacles in letters, as its manly ſpirit has ultimately borne all before it in the unhappy conteſts of war.

No. CXXX. ON THE PECULIAR DANGER OF FALLING INTO INDOLENCE IN A LITERARY AND RETIRED LIFE.

IT is certain, that as our anceſtors were induced to found colleges by religious motives, ſo they chiefly intended them to anſwer the purpoſes of religion. Thoſe pious benefactors to mankind did not mean to eſtabliſh ſeminaries to prepare men for the world, but to teach them to deſpiſe it. But more enlightened periods than thoſe in which theſe worthies lived, have diſcovered, that man beſt obeys his Maker when he takes an active part in the duties of ſociety.

A long reſidence in a college is, perhaps, ſcarcely leſs unfavourable to devotion than to ſocial activity. For devotion depends chiefly on lively affections, exerciſed and agitated by the viciſſitudes of hope and fear in the various tranſactions and events of human intercourſe. He who is almoſt placed beyond the reach of fortune in the ſhelter of a cloiſter, may, indeed, be led by the ſtatutes of the inſtitution to attend his chapel, and doze over his cuſhion, but he will not feel, in any peculiar manner, the impulſe of devotional fervour. The man who is engaged in the buſy and honourable duties of active life, flies from the world to the altar for comfort and refreſhment; but the cloiſtered recluſe pants, while he is kneeling in all the formalities of religion, for the pleaſures and employments of that world from which he is ſecluded. During ſeveral centuries, a great part of mankind was confined in monaſteries, ſolely for the advancement of religion and learning; yet never was the earth more benighted than in thoſe periods, by bigotry and

ignorance. Nor will any one assert, that in subsequent times, and in modern universities, the improvements in knowledge and religion have been, in any degree, proportioned to the numbers of those who have been separated from the world to facilitate their cultivation. The truth seems to be, that when the common incentives to industry are removed, and all the natural wants supplied without the necessity of exertion, man degenerates as the pure waters of the river stagnate and become putrid in the pool. At last, the boasting possessor of reason contents himself with dreaming "the blank of life along," with no other proofs of existence than the wants of the animal nature. Take away love, ambition, the changes and chances of this mortal life, and man will be contented to eat, drink, sleep, and die.

Not in colleges alone, though they may be considered as the temples of indolence, but in common life also, the human mind becomes torpid, as the necessity of exertion is diminished. He who, confiding in the possession of a fortune for his happiness, avoids the avocations of a profession, and what he calls the fatiguing parts of study will soon lose those powers of mental activity which he has not resolution to employ. If he does not gradually degenerate to a level with the irrational creation, he already in some respects resembles the vegetable. When the habits are irretrievably confirmed, it might perhaps be happy, if his nature would permit him to become at last impassive and quiescent; but as spontaneous fermentation takes place in masses of putrefaction, so, in the mind which has ceased to be exercised by its own efforts, emotions and habits will voluntarily arise both offensive and dangerous. Pride and envy, conceit and obstinacy, selfishness and sensuality, are among the ugly daughters of indolence.

It may appear paradoxical, but it is certainly an opinion authorised by experience, that an active life is the most friendly to contemplation. The fire of the mind, like culinary fire, has burned with a clear and constant flame, when opened and ventilated by perpetual motion, as it has been smothered and extinguished in smoke, when suffered to remain long without disturbance. The best, and many of the most voluminous writers, acted still more than they wrote.

What could be more unlike the life of the cloiſter than the lives of Xenophon, Julius Cæſar, Eraſmus, and a thouſand others, whoſe days were ſo engaged in negociation, in ſenates, in battles, in travelling, that it is not eaſy to conceive how they could find time even to write ſo great a quantity as they certainly compoſed? But ſuch are the effects of aſſiduity, of an uninterrupted accumulation of efforts, that he who has been excited to reſtleſs activity by the ſpurs of honour, intereſt, and a generoſity of nature, has frequently accompliſhed more by himſelf, than a thouſand of his fellow-creatures employed in the ſame ſphere, and furniſhed, by nature, with equal abilities for improvement. A hackney writer of catch-penny compilations, the printer of a newſpaper, the maker of a magazine, though engaged in a multiplicity of daily and various avocations, will perform, in a few months, a portion of literary labour, which ſhall infinitely exceed that of whole colleges, of thoſe who ſlumber, or waſte their activity on hounds and horſes on the borders of the muddy Cam and the ſlowly winding Charwell.

But it avails little to point out the diſorders of literary indolence, without endeavouring to ſuggeſt a remedy. It appears then to me, that thoſe whom providence has bleſſed with leiſure, and the opportunity of ſpending it in the purſuits of learning, and the liberal pleaſures of retirement, too often languiſh in their purſuits, from neglecting to render them the ſubjects of debate and converſation. It is the warmth of diſcuſſion in free and ſocial meetings which invigorates ſolitary ſtudy, and ſends the ſcholar back to his books with freſh alacrity. The hope of making a figure in a ſubſequent meeting, the fear of a ſhameful expoſure, and of appearing inferior to thoſe who are, in a natural and civil view, our equals, will ſtimulate all our powers, and engage all our attention, while we ſit in thoſe very libraries, where we once nodded and ſlumbered over the page even of a Homer. Meetings ſhould be eſtabliſhed in all literary ſocieties for the communication of remarks and the rehearſal of compoſitions. But the ſtricteſt rules ſhould be preſcribed and obſerved for the preſervation of decorum; or elſe a majority of Maſters of Arts would vote away the books,

the pens and the ink, and all the moral, philoſophical, and taſteful diſcourſes, in order to introduce pipes and tobacco, Joe Miller, and the punch-bowl.

It is right alſo, that contemplative men, however far removed from the neceſſity of employment by the liberality of fortune, ſhould communicate with mankind, not only in pleaſures and amuſements, but in real duties and active virtues, either conjugal, paternal, profeſſional, official, or charitable. Something ſhould be engaged in, with ſuch obligations to performance, that an inclination to neglect ſhould be over-ruled by legal compulſion, or the fear of certain loſs and ſhame. The beſt method of avoiding the wretched ſtate of not knowing what to do, is, to involve one's ſelf in ſuch circumſtances as ſhall force one to do ſomething. The natural indolence of the human heart is found to eſcape every reſtraint but the iron arm of neceſſity. Such is our preſent condition, that we muſt be often chained down to our real happineſs and our beſt enjoyments.

With reſpect to the prevention of indolence in an academical life, it would certainly be a happy circumſtance, if none were allowed to reſide in an univerſity above ſeven years, who were not actually engaged in the compoſition of a learned work, or in ſuperintending the education of youth as tutors, profeſſors, and heads of colleges. A ſenior fellow, without theſe employments, is one of the unhappieſt and leaſt uſeful members of the community.

No. CXXXI. ON THE MANNERS OF A METROPOLIS.

WHATEVER may be the political advantages of a very populous capital, and I believe they are of a very diſputable nature, the moral and phyſical evils of it are evidently numerous, and deſtructive of the human race. This obſervation is, indeed, true of all cities, in which too great a proportion of the people is aſſembled; but I ſhall confine my preſent obſervations to the capital of the Britiſh empire.

The junction of Weſtminſter with London, or of the

court with the city, is very juſtly ſuppoſed to have a pernicious influence on both; on thoſe who are engaged in the employments of commerce, and on thoſe who are invited, from their paternal manſions, by the court and the ſenate-houſe. The courtier communicates to the citizen a love of pleaſure, of diſſipation, of vanity; and the citizen to the courtier, an idolatrous veneration of opulence. The courtier introduces the viciſſitudes of taſte and faſhion; the citizen imitates them, and furniſhes, in profuſion, the means of their diſplay and gratification. Thus are luxury, and all its conſequent vices and miſeries, advanced to as high a degree as they can reach, by the union of ingenuity to invent modes of indulgence, with wealth to ſupply the materials.

Lovers of pleaſure in exceſs, are always lovers of themſelves in the ſame degree; and their love, with all the characteriſtical blindneſs of the paſſion, commonly injures its object. We ſhall therefore find ſelfiſhneſs prevailing in the metropolis, and producing all its natural effects of avarice, private gratifications, meanneſs, ſervility, and inhoſpitality. True patriotiſm and public ſpirit, though the very want of them will often cauſe the greateſt pretenſions to them, will ſeldom be found in the more numerous claſſes who inhabit the capital. Where money and pleaſure are the ſole objects of ardent purſuit, public virtue, and indeed all virtue, will be expoſed to ſale, whenever a purchaſer can be found to pay the price. "Money, O ye citizens!" ſays Horace, in a ſtyle of ſatirical irony, "is firſt to be ſought; and it "is time enough to think of virtue, when you have ſecured "a fortune."

The inhabitants of a great city will often be inhoſpitable and unneighbourly. Their attention is fixed on advancing and gratifying themſelves, and they conſider their neighbours as rivals, or at leaſt as not worth cultivating, ſince they can always buy amuſement at the numerous places of public reſort and diverſion. But in the country, mutual good offices take place, from a mutual deſire and neceſſity of a friendly intercourſe. The Londoner hardly knows the name of his next door neighbour; and in accidents and diſtreſs, would as ſoon think of ſending to Rome, as to him, for comfort and aſſiſtance. But in any emergency in a vil-

lage, every hand is ready to afford relief. Hospitality to strangers still lingers in the distant country, but has long been banished from that region of avarice and selfish profusion, an overgrown city. Pay a visit in Sussex, in Devonshire, in Cornwall, in Wales, in the North, and compare your reception among strangers, with that which you meet with in London and Westminster. Luxury, avarice, and vice, have indeed a natural tendency to annihilate every generous principle, and to harden the heart against all connections, which do not promise to terminate in sensual pleasure, or in lucrative advantage.

The secrecy with which crimes can be committed in a crowd, is a powerful temptation. The Londoner may be involved in debauchery, and engaged in fraud, without being suspected at home, or in his neighbourhood. In the country, the fear of shame, and a principle of pride, often operate, when virtue, honour, and conscience, would cease to restrain; for no one can there be guilty of an action remarkably dishoneſt or immoral without detection. A gentleman who should devote himself to the arts of the swindler, or the practices of the profligate debauchee, in a village or country town, would soon be compelled, by the hisses of infamy, to desert the place, or to live there in solitude. But in a city, even men adorned with the robes of magistracy may proceed, with little notice, in the most scandalous conduct.

Weakness of body and weakness of understanding are often found to characterize the inhabitant of the capital. Luxury, want of air, want of sleep, excess in food and in sensual indulgence, have a natural tendency to debilitate. And if there were not continual supplies from the North, I know not whether the city would not exhibit the human race in a most lamentable condition of imbecility, folly, distortion, and deformity. Compare the limbs of the volunteer soldiers in the metropolis with those of the rustic militia, or regulars; compare the conduct and understanding of him who was born within the sound of Bow bell, with those of the hardy native of Yorkshire or Scotland.

The extremes of irreligion and enthusiasm mark the manners of the capital. These, indeed, are the natural conse-

quences of some among the many bad dispositions already enumerated. Sunday is considered by the thrifty trader as a holiday, on which he may indulge without imprudence. It is therefore distinguished by many from the rest of the week, solely by excess, and by vicious indulgences. The parish churches are neglected; nor is there a great concourse to any place of worship, except where some enthusiast or hypocrite has opened a receptacle for those who labour under the symptoms of idiotism or insanity. The symptoms are often confirmed under this injudicious course, till they arrive at a degree of real and most melancholy madness.

I have pointed out some peculiar evils in the manners of the metropolis with two intentions: one is, to prevent, in some degree, the prevailing practice of emigrating from the country, from the seats of health and comparative innocence, to that sink of sin, and that grave of the human race, a city too drowded with people, and over-run with every abomination. The other is, to suggest a hint which may alleviate that part of the evil which admits a remedy. The love of money, of distinction, of pleasure, will probably frustrate the former purpose; but the latter, in a day of national distress, or under other circumstances favourable to virtue, may possibly be accomplished.

To promote a reformation of manners, additional authority and efficiency must be given to the clergy and magistrates of London. Both of them are at this time looked upon by the vulgar, both high and low, with sovereign contempt. The churches are left to curates, or poor incumbents, who, in a place where riches are idolized, hold a rank scarcely equal to the keeper of an alehouse or an oil-shop. The justices of Middlesex have long been the standing objects of hatred and derision. Are the London clergy, who labour strenuously in their vocation, and on whom so much of the state of morals and christianity depends, particularly countenanced by the ministry or the bishops? It is parliamentary interest which procures mitres, and stalls, and livings; and though a city curate, or incumbent, should convert millions from the error of their ways, he would still be suffered to elbow his way along Cheapside in his thread-

bare coat and tattered gown; pointed out and laughed at by every apprentice. The common people will not discriminate. They will despise religion and morals when they see the teachers of them poor, mean, and neglected.

Is it not a disgrace to the Defenders of the Faith, &c. that a London clergyman, who has promoted every charity, and probably reformed great numbers, during thirty or forty years, shall be suffered to live and die with nothing but a curacy and a beggarly lectureship? and that, in the mean time, he who is related to a lord, or connected with members of parliament, though he never preached, and can hardly read, shall be loaded with dignities and pluralities? He who would reform the capital, I repeat, must render the clergy respectable in the eyes of the vulgar, and the magistrates formidable.

No. CXXXII. ON PHILELPHUS AND THEODORE GAZA, POLITE SCHOLARS OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

THOUGH the admirer of elegant letters will find his sweetest, most solid, and most constant pleasures of the learned kind, in the writings of the Augustan age; yet he will often feel his curiosity powerfully excited, and amply rewarded, by those among the revivers of learning who are distinguished by the politeness of their literary accomplishments. I was lately amusing myself in this pleasant walk of classical literature, when I accidentally met with the Epistles of Philelphus. Though they are not without a few expressions which mark the barbarism of his times, they possess a considerable share of elegance, and partake much of the graces which shine so agreeable in the epistles of Pliny and Cicero.

Philelphus was born at Tolentino, in Italy, in the year 1398; a very early period for so uncommon an instance of proficiency. He died at Florence in 1480, after having filled a long life with the most laborious application. Let it be remembered, that printing was unknown at that time, and

that not only the books which were compoſed, but which were alſo read, were often painfully tranſcribed by the ſtudent.

Philelphus was no inconſiderable poet, but was crowned with laurel, according to the faſhion of the times, by Alphonſo king of Naples. He wrote five different works in verſe, and, according to his own account in one of his letters, they conſiſted of ten books of ſatires, five books of miſcellaneous poems, the Sfortiad in eight books, ten books of epigrams, and three of Greek poems. The number of verſes in the whole, as calculated by himſelf, amounted to thirty-three thouſand eight hundred. He has omitted, in this computation, his Nicholaus, a poem in two books, and in ſapphic verſe, which he compoſed in honour of Pope Nicholas the Fifth by whom he was greatly eſteemed, and who had invited him, by a large preſent, to undertake the tranſlation of Homer into Latin. He was ſcarcely leſs voluminous in proſe, but leſs original, as his proſaic works conſiſt chiefly of tranſlations from Lyſias, Ariſtole, Xenophon, Hippocrates, and Plutarch; though he has alſo written two books of Convivia, three entitled Commentationes Florentinæ, five on Moral Diſcipline, and the Life and Exploits of Francis Sfortia, in compliment to whom the Sfortiad, which has been mentioned already, was compoſed. There are alſo Orationes, of which Eraſmus ſpeaks rather unfavourably in his Ciceronianus.

But the only work of Philelphus which I have had an opportunity of inſpecting, is the Epiſtles, of which this prolific author, in the courſe of a long life, has written no fewer than thirty-ſeven books. Theſe abound with eloquence, and with ſuch literary anecdotes and particulars, as cannot but afford amuſement to the curious ſcholar. Though Morhoff rather ſlights them, yet Eraſmus, a much better judge, acknowledges that they reſemble Cicero.

I preſent the reader with an extract from one of them, ſelected for no other reaſon than that I happen to be reading it at the time I am writing, and that it characterizes the ſpirit of the author, and the great attachment which he bore to books. Cardinal Beſſario, the patriarch of Conſtantinople, had applied to him, deſiring him to ſell his copy of He-

mer's Iliad; to which requeſt Philelphus thus replies: "That copy of Homer's Iliad which the very learned Theodore Gaza has written out for me, I value ſo much, that I would not part with it to any man for all the vaſt and wonderful treaſures of Crœſus. I am really ſurpriſed that you ſhould think that I, who always had the character of generoſity, ſhould be ſo much changed as to be capable of avarice. I have learned to give away many things, but to ſell nothing; particularly books; than which I eſteem nothing of greater value. But this book of Homer is ſo dear to my heart, and affords me ſo much pleaſure, that life itſelf can furniſh nothing more delightful. Therefore, pardon me in this one thing. If I can gratify you in any thing elſe, you may command me, and ſhall not be diſappointed." My paper will not admit a number of citations, and I will therefore content myſelf with referring the lover of elegant latinity and literary anecdotes to the original collection.

It is a circumſtance which adds to our ſurpriſe in contemplating this example of literary induſtry, that Philelphus was very much engaged in wars and embaſſies; ſo true is it, that the greateſt exertions of mind are compatible with the moſt active life. His writings are not free from faults, from that inaccuracy which proceeds from haſte; but he is ſtill a ſtupendous inſtance of diligence and excellence. Who but muſt lament, that, after having done ſo much to enlighten a dark age, and enjoyed the friendſhip of Princes and Pontiffs, he ſhould die in his eighty-ſecond year ſo poor, that his bed, and the utenſils of his kitchen, were obliged to be ſold to pay the expences of his funeral? But few men of real genius love money; and of the liberality of Philelphus, the fragment which I have inſerted is an ample teſtimony.

I hope it will not be tedious or diſagreeable to the reader, if I mention a few circumſtances relative to the friend and contemporary of Philelphus, Theodore Gaza, of whom he ſpeaks in his epiſtle, as having tranſcribed for him a very fine copy of Homer's Iliad.

Theodore Gaza was born at Theſſalonica, but received a part of his education in Italy. He was an elegant writer

both in the Greek and Latin languages; but he displayed his abilities chiefly in translation; a most useful labour when the learned languages were imperfectly understood. He translated parts of Aristotle, Theophrastus, and Hippocrates, into Latin; and the treatise of Cicero on Old Age into Greek. He wrote also a treatise on Grammar in four books, which has been greatly celebrated. Greek learning, and indeed all ancient learning, is greatly indebted to this distinguished reviver of it, Theodore Gaza.

But he also was unfortunate, and adds to the number of those whom Providence has exhibited to prove that the rewards of virtuous and useful labour do not consist in riches, honours, or any thing else which the rulers of this world are able to bestow. Poor Gaza had dedicated his translation and Commentaries on Aristotle's Book on Animals to Pope Sixtus the Fourth, in hopes of procuring from his patronage a little provision for his old age. The Pope gave him only a purse with a few pieces in it, and accompanied his gift with a manner which induced Gaza to conclude that it was the last favour he should receive. Gaza received it in silence; and as he walked home, all melancholy and indignant, along the banks of the Tiber, he threw the purse into the stream; and soon after died of vexation and disappointment.

I have introduced these examples with a view to animate the student to industry; and at the same time, to teach him to seek his reward in his own heart, in the approbation of Heaven, in the private satisfaction of study; and not to depend too much on princes, pontiffs, or popular favour.

No. CXXXIII. ON THE INEFFICACY OF THAT STYLE OF SPEAKING AND WRITING WHICH MAY BE CALLED THE FROTHY.

ON the decline of ancient learning and Augustan taste, there arose a number of sophists and delaimers who, in pursuit of an excellence in style superior to the natural gra-

ces of a better age, deviated into a moſt contemptible affectation. Quaint, awkward, and frivolous as were their embelliſhments, they paid their principal attention to them, and totally neglected ſolidity and ſubſtance. This ſtyle of writing characterizes the decline of a genuine and manly eloquence. It is indeed like the hectic efflorescence on the countenance of an invalid far advanced in a conſumption.

In ſeveral departments of modern literature, and even in our own country, a ſtyle of writing has appeared which very much reſembles the ſophiſtical and declamatory. But I know not that it has been ſo conſpicuous in any of our publications, as in the popular addreſſes from the pulpit. Several of the favourite preachers in the capital, who ſeldom fail to fill every church in which they harangue, and to raiſe the largeſt contributions to charity ſchools, have preſented the public with their ſermons, in order to make the experiment, whether that oratory which delights the lower orders in the pulpit would be equally well received in the cloſet. It was an unhappy experiment for the reputation of the orators; for there hardly ever appeared more remarkable ſpecimens of florid, frothy, and meretricious eloquence. Sounding braſs, and tinkling cymbals, are deſcriptions of it truly emblematical. If there is any ſweetneſs, it is a ſweetneſs which cloys and makes you ſick; if there is any brightneſs, it is a brightneſs which dazzles and gives you pain; if there is any gold, it is not like the bullion, but like the leaf, expanded to a ſuperficies almoſt impalpable, under the operation of the goldbeater. Indeed this ſpecies of ſtyle is very well deſcribed by the common epithet of the frothy; but, as a means of ſupplying aliment, or as a conſtant diet, what is a ſyllabub to a ſirloin?

Indeed almoſt all the popular preachers in London have found it eaſier to themſelves, and more agreeable to an illiterate and unthinking audience, to addreſs the ears, the fancy, and the paſſions, than the faculties of reaſon and judgment. If their diſcourſes were found to produce any better effect on their hearers, than that of furniſhing an amuſement for a leiſure half-hour, it would be wrong to cenſure them, merely becauſe they are offenſive to a delicate and refined taſte. But the truth is, that they excite only

tranſient emotions, which, though they may laſt long enough to draw from the hearer a ſhilling for the churchwarden's plate at the church door, will ſeldom go home with him, or produce an uniform influence on his perſonal and ſocial conduct. He goes to hear a fine preacher as he goes to a play, to be entertained when he has nothing elſe to do; he pays for his entertainment at the door, and gives himſelf no farther concern on ſuch ſubjects, but to look out for a ſimilar one, when his ſhop or warehouſe, or countinghouſe, are ſhut up, through the neceſſity of complying with the laws and cuſtoms of the country.

It may be ſaid, that though a taſte, formed by the pure models of Greece and Rome, may reprobate the frothy ſtyle, yet ſince it is found to entertain the vulgar of a great capital, ſometimes uſefully, and always innocently, it ought not to be exploded. But perhaps it cannot be granted, that it does entertain them either uſefully or innocently. It certainly gives them wrong ideas of religion, and teaches them to neglect and deſpiſe the diſpaſſionate ſuggeſtions of reaſon. But it is one of the principal objections to this popular or frothy preaching, that it allures men from their own pariſh churches, and induces them to deſert the pulpit of a modeſt and regularly educated clergyman, for ſome noiſy and bold, ſome ignorant and hypocritical pretender. It leads them from the light of the ſun to thoſe meteors and vapours whoſe dancing and uncertain gleam often conducts them into quagmires. There are few pariſhes in the metropolis which do not contain ſome thouſands of inhabitants; but you ſhall often find in their reſpective churches not more than one hundred, and ſometimes ſcarcely half that number. Whither are they gone? Many, indeed, are carouſing in the delectable retreats of the rural Hoxton; but many are alſo gone to the new-built chapels, or the crowded churches, where ſome ſilver tongued orator is preaching himſelf, with all the pathos of a white handkerchief, the ſplendour of a diamond ring, the ſmartneſs of a well-dreſſed head, and the deceitful grimaces of an impoſtor. Religion, however, muſt loſe much of her venerable air, when, inſtead of the decent cloathing of a chaſte and honourable matron, ſhe is repreſented in the taudry and flimſy garment, with the painted cheeks, the glaſs ear-rings, the falſe brilliants of the falſe courtezan.

I think I may confidently affirm, that the frothy ſtyle would not be tolerated at the bar or in the ſenate. It would be thought too trifling for the important ſubjects of property and politics. It would be an object of ridicule. And ſhall that oratory which is hooted from the forum, not only take refuge, but lift up her head in triumph in the pulpit? It is not ſurpriſing, that men of ſenſe paſs by wagging their heads when they find an orator haranguing in a church with all the affected language and ſentiments of a faſhionable auctioneer. The eloquence which has diſtinguiſhed many of the moſt favourite preachers, and writers of pulpit harangues, is not that of St. Paul, of Demoſthenes, of Cicero; but of thoſe great maſters of florid deſcription, Meſſieurs Langford and Chriſtie.

I believe it will appear conſiſtent with reaſon that a peculiar degree of gravity and ſolidity, far exceeding that of the ſenate or bar, is required to produce the due effect of pulpit oratory. Practical divinity is the graveſt ſpecies of moral philoſophy, deriving additional dignity and force from the authenticity of revelation. The appearance of truth and ſimplicity, is its moſt becoming ornament. To apply to it the little arts of rhetoric, and the petty graces of affectation, would be like painting in tawdry and variegated colours, thoſe Corinthian columns of St. Paul's cathedral, which derive all their beauties from their ſimple and ſymmetrical grandeur. When we go to church we hope to hear ſalutary truth, and to receive improvement of mind and morals. When we wiſh to be only amuſed, we ſhall repair to the opera and the puppet-ſhow.

I will take the liberty to hint to young and faſhionable divines, who are in general ſmitten with the falſe graces of ſtyle and delivery, that their congregation would be much more edified, if, inſtead of moral eſſays, in what they call *fine language*, they would preach ſermons, properly ſo called, in the plain ſtyle of truth and ſcripture. Let them alſo take care, as they will anſwer it to Him in whoſe name they aſcend the pulpit, not to preach themſelves but the Goſpel; not to be ſo ſolicitous in the diſplay of a white hand, as of a pure heart; of a diamond ring, as of a ſhining example.

No. CXXXIV. ON THE GENIUS OF ERASMUS.

BATAVIA and Bœotia are by no means remarkable for the production of genius; but Bœotia may boaſt her Pindar, and Batavia her Eraſmus.

I mean not to conſider the theological opinions of Eraſmus, but his learning and his genius; and of theſe I may venture to affirm, that if Eraſmus had lived in an Auguſtan age, they would have advanced him to a rank among the beſt of the claſſics. But the theology and theologians of his times were at open war with the graces of taſte and elegance; and, conſidering the authority which they poſſeſſed, and the ſcarcity of any other writings than thoſe which proceeded from the cloiſter, it may be pronounced almoſt impoſſible to have lived and written in that age, without contracting a tinge of the prevailing barbariſm.

The ſtyle of Eraſmus is not therefore perfectly pure and claſſical; but it is his own, and it has a native charm which renders it agreeable. I would not adviſe a young man to view it as a model; nor, indeed, to be much converſant in the works of Eraſmus, or any modern writer of Latin, till his taſte be formed, and his judgment regulated, by Terence, Virgil, Cæſar, and Cicero.

But he, whoſe mind is mature, and whoſe comprehenſive powers are capable of graſping all pre-eminent authors, whether ancient or modern, will receive pleaſure and improvement in a great degree from the writings of Eraſmus. They have uſually been ſtudied only by divines, and for theological information. But I warmly recommend them to the lover of philology, or of claſſical learning, as furniſhing a diſh for ſuch a palate, both plentiful and highly ſeaſoned. Eraſmus was born to cultivate the *literæ humaniores*, or the politer arts of learning; and I have often lamented, that he ſhould have been diverted from thoſe flowery paths into the rough roads of controverſial divinity.

The Colloquies, or Dialogues of Eraſmus, are often uſed to initiate boys, at an early age, in the ſtudy of the Latin

language. They are uncommonly lively, entertaining, and instructive; and as there is not much danger of corrupting the style of a very young boy, there are, perhaps, few books better adapted to the purpose. Indeed, we must not do Erasmus the injustice to assert, that he is devoid of elegance in style; for though, wherever he expresses theological ideas, he is almost under the necessity of using words unknown to the writers of a better age, yet, on other occasions, he really abounds with phrases of the purest and the sweetest latinity. Neither are his Dialogues to be considered as fit only for boys, since they abound in wit, humour, good sense, and in allusions which strongly mark the fertility of the mind from which they originate. In a comparative estimate of genius, according to its kinds and degrees, I should not hesitate to place Erasmus in the same class with Lucian. There is, indeed, a seasoning of salt in all his writings, in which the necessity of being grave did not forbid him to be facetious. The *Ciceronianus* is an admirable specimen of judgment and pleasantry.

His Praise of Folly is a most humourous satire, and reflects no less honour on the inventive powers, than on the good sense of its author; as it was written, if I mistake not, in the space of one week, for the amusement of himself and Sir Thomas More, at whose house he was upon a visit. It made its author many enemies; but his genius rose like the arm of a giant against a host of pigmies, and defeated them all after a short conflict. His forgiveness of the vain and angry Dorpius, who first attacked him, evinces his magnanimity and goodness of heart. Spite and envy may secretly undermine, but can seldom make an open and successful attack on the fortress of true genius and sincere virtue.

But the Epistles of Erasmus will, perhaps, be found to furnish the student in philology with more amusement than any other of his works. They are, indeed, a valuable treasure of curious information. Their clear and lively language, their poignant wit, and good-natured humour, render it difficult to lay them aside, when once we are engaged in the perusal of them. They are very numerous, but they are by no means all which Erasmus wrote. He com-

plains, indeed, of being obliged to write so many, that there was not a possibility of taking copies of them all. A great share of knowledge of the world, and of human nature, as well as of letters and literary characters, may be collected from them by the attentive reader.

But, indeed, to whatever part of his voluminous works we turn our attention, we can scarcely avoid the sentiments of pleasure and surprize. He has written more than many students were ever able to read. He has written so excellently, that all the learned, except a few envious contemporaries, from his own times to ours, have uniformly considered him as a prodigy. And let it never be forgotten, that, under Providence, he owed his education and subsequent improvements entirely to himself. He was used ill and neglected in his youth. He abounded neither in books nor in instructors; but he possessed a genius and a love of letters, before which all obstacles usually give way, like the Alps to an Hannibal.

It adds greatly to our wonder, in contemplating his large and crowded tombs, when we recollect that he spent his life in a most unsettled state, and in constantly travelling from city to city, and from kingdom to kingdom. But his mind was employed in study wherever he went, and he composed many parts of his works as he rode on his horse. He was also attacked by many enemies; and though he was placable, yet as he was also irascible, much of that time and attention, which would otherwise have been devoted to calm contemplation, was necessarily lost in controversy.

He was certainly the greatest man of his time. Popes, kings, archbishops, bishops, and cardinals, hide their diminished heads in his presence. One is, indeed, almost tempted to laugh when one surveys a group of stupid personages, with crowns and mitres, riches and titles, sitting on their thrones and in their cathedrals, yet bowing with an homage at once abject and involuntary, to the personal merit of the poor Erasmus. He indeed was permitted by Providence to pass through his pilgrimage in this world without ecclesiastical riches or dignity; he was designed as an instance to prove, that great merit is its own reward, and that temporal distinctions are allowed, like trifles beneath the notice

of heaven, to fall indiſcriminately on the deſerving and the undeſerving, the learned and the ignorant. Eraſmus had no mitre; but he had the internal ſatisfactions of genius; he had glory, he had liberty.

Though I am ſenſible he wants no addition to his fame, and could not receive any from my applauſe, yet I have ventured to pay him this humble tribute, as the oblation of gratitude for the great and repeated pleaſure which his works once afforded me in the retirement of a college.

No. CXXXV. ON THE EDUCATION OF A PRINCE.

AN opinion has often prevailed, that the education of a prince ought to be totally different from that of other gentlemen, and that any remarkable ſhare of learning would diſgrace him. I ſhall not heſitate to affirm, that they were the enemies of princes who advanced ſuch an opinion; for nothing can contribute more effectually to the general abolition of the monarchical form of government, than to render the character and perſon of the monarch contemptible. In an age and country enlightened like our own, if a king were the only gentleman unadorned with a liberal education, his kingly office would ſerve only to augment the contempt, and rouſe the indignation of his people. Though he ſhould ſit on his throne, ſurrounded by his cringing courtiers and his ſtanding army; and tho' he ſhould number among the provinces of his empire, the regions of the eaſt and the weſt; yet, in the eyes of every ſenſible and independent ſpectator, his perſonal littleneſs would be rendered ſtill leſs, by a compariſon with his hereditary and official magnificence. The faults of the perſon would be attributed to the form of his government; and men of the greateſt moderation, if they were exempt from royal influence, would heave an involuntary ſigh for a republic or a revolution.

Every friend therefore to a reigning family, every lover of political tranquillity, and of regular ſubordination, will wiſh to augment the perſonal accompliſhments of that youth

who is destined, at some future period, to wield a sceptre. He will recollect, that the mind of a prince comes from the hand of nature, in a state no less rude than the mind of a peasant; and that, if it is not formed by early culture, it will soon become much ruder, more refractory and more vicious, under the many unfavourable circumstances of an exalted station. It will be readily allowed, that a peculiar polish, enlargement, and liberality, is required in him who is to look with a comprehensive eye through all the ranks of society, and estimate the true interests of nations, and of mankind at large. Both the heart and the understanding of such an one should be expanded to the utmost degree of possible dilatation.

But no method of culture is found so much to fertilize the human mind, as that kind of discipline which is called the classical. A prince, therefore, though he should certainly be educated in private, ought to be trained according to the modes which the experience of ages has established as the most successful in a public seminary. No whimsical systems of pragmatical and conceited tutors should be admitted. The boy should be taught his grammar like other boys; for, though there is indeed a royal game of the goose, I never have yet heard of a royal method of learning Latin and Greek; and if there be such an one, the success of it still remains among the arcana of state.

An heir to the crown should certainly learn the ancient as well as the modern languages; and he will not be able to learn them effectually, without learning them radically. Away then with the indolence and indulgence which grandeur foolishly claims as a happy privilege! Let the boy, if you wish him to maintain the dignity of a man and a king, be early enured to mental labour. Let his memory be exercised in learning the rules of Lilly's grammar. Let him be confined to his books and papers al the morning, and part of the evening, from the age of five to nineteen. The maids of honour will cry out, shame! the sycophantic herd of young noblemen, who crowd, with all the servility of their own footmen, around a throne, will repine that they cannot have an opportunity of introducing themselves to the familiarity of the future king; but regard neither

the foolish exclamations of vanity, nor the mean murmurs of self-interest. Proceed with him regularly from the fables of Phædrus to the philosophy of Cicero, from the Cyropædia of Xenophon to the histories and politics of Herodotus, Thucydides, Livy, Sallust, and Polybius. Let his ear be familiarized to the fine language and sentiments of Cicero and Demosthenes, and his heart ennobled by the examples of the brightest characters of Greece and Rome.

Why should his superintendants be so cruel as not to cultivate in him a taste for the beauties of poetry, or leave him unacquainted with Homer and Virgil? An elegant taste, an humanized disposition, an enlightened understanding, will adorn him more than the jewels in his crown, or the robes of his coronation. It will give him an internal source of happiness, and will teach him rather to seek his pleasures in a humane and generous conduct, than in the display of pomp, or the indulgence of luxury. A prince, with a mind uncultivated, must necessarily take his chief delight in mischief, in vice, or in unprincely occupations; but he, whose understanding is illuminated, and heart purified by a right discipline, will deserve a title which has been often unjustly claimed—that of Heaven's vicegerent.

When, by the close application of ten or twelve years, a firm and broad basis is laid of ancient learning, let the stripling be introduced to the avenues of all the parts of human knowledge. Let the years which elapse till he is of the age of three or four and twenty, be employed in acquiring proper ideas of all the objects, whether natural or civil, which surround him, under the tuition of a governor, who possesses not only official and titular, but personal authority; under one who is not frightened by the laughter of fashion, of dissipation, or of false philosophy, from filling his pupil's mind with moral virtues, and a sincere, not a political, veneration for Christianity.

All this is a general preparation for the particular pursuits which become a king, and these are law and politics. I mean not the narrow system of a mercenary practitioner and a cunning statesman, but the general principles of justice and equity; the wise maxims of government, as it is instituted for the diffusion of happiness and virtue among

the individuals of a nation, and not for the extenſion of empire, or the accumulation of deſtructive opulence. What a ſituation is a throne for the indulgence of the feelings of a chriſtian, and of a compaſſionate friend to wretched human nature! I would not, indeed, refer a prince for maxims of equity and government to Puffendorf and Grotius, the dull and unfeeling deliberators of queſtions on which a good heart and underſtanding can intuitively decide; but to his own heart and eyes, to his own enlightened reaſon, to the page of ſcripture, and to the volumes of authenticated hiſtory. Let him appropriate Telemachus.

Princes have been almoſt uniformly confined in their views to the narrow ſyſtems of worldly politicians, and of intereſted courtiers. Falſe grandeur has faſcinated themſelves and their ſubjects. National proſperity has been eſtimated by fleets and armies, commerce and revenues. The morals, the health, the religion of the individuals, are conſiderations which do not claim the attention of a cabinet, but are diſcarded as ſubjects of declamation in the church or in the ſchools. "What is it to me," cries aloud the wiſdom of this world, "while his lordſhip knows how to "ſuperintend the navy, whether he believes in God or the "Devil, and whether he has kept ſuch laws as I neither "underſtand nor value, the laws of relative and chriſtian "duty?" A nation thus advances in the devious paths of a falſe wiſdom, till an incenſed Providence, wearied with repeated provocations, viſits it at laſt with a curſe. Look from the Ganges to the Thames, and acknowledge the evident viſitation of a chaſtiſing Providence.

Imagination triumphs in the proſpect of a golden age, when princes, and all who are concerned in the executive parts of government, ſhall be early formed to virtue, to learning, to humanity, to religion. How happy, it has been ſaid, would it be, if philoſophers, who are juſtly ſo called, were kings; or kings, philoſophers!

No. CXXXVI. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS ON THE ART OF PRINTING.

THAT the desire of knowledge for its own sake, is an adventitious passion unknown to nature, and to be classed among the refinements of civilization, is an opinion unsupported by experience, and derogatory from the native dignity of a rational creature. Fancy and sentiment, the powers of the intellect, and the feelings of the heart, are, perhaps, by nature equally strong and susceptible in the rude Indian, and in the polished member of an established community. Perhaps these similar powers would be equally fit for exertion, and these propensities equally importunate for gratification, if the savage were not constantly engaged in providing for that necessary sustenance, which, without his own interposition, is commonly secured to the philosopher.

The pupil of nature, under all his disadvantages, feels the impulse of a species of literary curiosity, and seeks its satisfaction. He possesses the faculty of memory; he must, therefore, without the co-operation of his will, remember many of the impressions received by the senses: he has a power of reflection, which will teach him to reason and draw inferences, without designing it, from the objects of his experience and observation. He feels within himself an imagination, capable of recalling past ideas of pleasure and pain; and apt to be delighted by beauty, novelty and grandeur. Every natural exertion of natural faculties, is attended with satisfaction. He feels it from the unpremeditated exertions of the mental powers; he tacitly acknowledges it to be congenial to his mind, and of course endeavours to repeat, to extend, and to prolong it: but the objects which fall under the notice of his own senses, and his personal experience, are insufficient in number and importance to satisfy his capacity. He is led to inquire what passed among his forefathers, and in his turn is requested by his progeny to communicate his own remarks, or recitals, superadded to the information of his ancestors.

Such, probably, is the origin of tradition; a mode of communicating knowledge, once, universal, and still, perhaps, subsisting in the newly discovered islands of the Pacific Ocean, on the banks of the Senegal, and at the foot of the Andes. Beneath the shade of his plantain, the patriarch Indian still recites the divine origin of his tribe, or family, the warlike actions of his ancestor, and of his own personal prowess. The attentive audience carry away the tale, and supply the defects of memory by the aid of imagination. The story spreads, time gives it a sanction, and at last it is found to constitute the most authentic history, however obscure and fabulous, of the origin of a nation, after it has emerged from barbarism, and is become the seat of arts and learning.

In the earliest and rudest state of literature, if we may give that appellation to the efforts of the intellectual faculties where letters are unknown, is often produced the most animated, and perhaps most perfect, though least artificial, poetry. Historic truth is, indeed, little regarded, as it is addressed to reason, rather than to fancy; but poetic composition appears with marks of genius approaching to inspiration. From his memory, or his invention, or from both, the savage is heard to pour forth the song of war, and to warble the notes of love, warm with the sentiments of a feeling heart, and compensating the want of regularity and grace, by the strength and vivacity of natural expression.

If we believe the representations of some writers, poems equal in length to the most celebrated epopeas of Greece and Rome, have been handed down without the aid of letters, from the remotest antiquity to the present day; and in our own country and times, traditionary tales, poetic and prosaic, are known to abound in that lowest class among us, who are yet unacquainted with the elements of learning. The tenant of the cottage, stupid and incurious as he may appear to the polite observer, has his fund of entertaining knowledge, and knows how to enliven the winter evening with tales of fairies, giants, and enchantments, which he believed on the word of his progenitors, and which his hearers receive with equal pleasure and credulity, intending to transmit them to the rising generation.

The early appearance, and the univerſality of traditional learning, ſeems to eſtabliſh the opinion, that the love of knowledge is among the firſt and moſt importunate deſires inherent to the human heart. We ſee it believing abſurdity, and admiring nonſenſe; we ſee it bearing one of the ſtrongeſt characteriſtics of natural inclinations, a proneneſs to neglect reaſon in purſuit of gratification.

This ardent love of knowledge, which gave riſe to tradition, ſoon invented improvements which ſuperſeded its general neceſſity. Tradition was ſoon found to be attended with great inconveniences, and to be defective in its moſt perfect ſtate. A thouſand important circumſtances muſt neceſſarily elude the moſt retentive memory and, beſide the evils reſulting from the weakneſs of that faculty, and from the general inclination to exaggerate and embelliſh the ſimplicity of truth, the want of written ſtandards to appeal to, afforded conſtant opportunities for impoſition. Uprightneſs of intention, and ſtrength of memory, were not always united in thoſe who undertook the recital of events. Accuracy and juſtneſs of repreſentation were rare; and the civil hiſtory of every people, without a ſingle exception, is, in its firſt periods, dark and incoherent; ſuch, indeed, as might be expected from oral authority.

The inventor of means to ſupply the defects of memory, and to preclude the opportunity of deceit, it is obvious to conclude, would be conſidered as a great benefactor to mankind, and elevated by the exuberant gratitude of a rude age, above the rank of humanity. To Theuth, the inventor of letters among the Egyptians, and to the ſame perſonage, under the name of Hermes among the Greeks, divine honours were paid; an apotheoſis ſurely more juſtifiable on principles of reaſon, than that of Bacchus the cultivator of the vine, or of Hercules the cleanſer of a ſtable.

To communicate their diſcovery, the inventors of literary ſymbols found it neceſſary to mark them on ſome ſubſtance ſuſceptible of impreſſion or penetration. What that ſubſtance was, is a ſubject of curious, but unimportant enquiry. The original mode of inſcribing the newly diſcovered characters, however conducted, was probably very im-

perfect; but, as it happens in all discoveries of momentous consequence, the idea of it, once started, was pursued with that general ardour and attention, which never fails to produce a great improvement. The stone, the palm leaf, the biblos or bark of the linden tree, the leaden tablet, the papyrus manufactured into the charta, the parchment, and the pugillares, respectively served, as progressive advancement suggested, or as convenience required, to receive the written lucubrations of the ancient poet, philosopher, legislator, and historian.

That many of the noblest efforts of ancient genius, though committed to writing on substances so frail as the papyrus, and so subject to erasure as the waxen tablet, should have reached the present age, is an event only to be accounted for by supposing, that their conspicuous beauties occasioned uncommon vigilance and solicitude in their preservation.

At a very late period, a substance formed of macerated linen, was found superior in beauty, convenience, and duration, and better adapted to the purposes of literature, than all the prior devices of mechanical ingenuity. It derived its name from the flag that grew on the banks of the Nile which though it in some degree resembled, it greatly excelled. Porous, yet of firm contexture, it admitted the inscription of characters with a facility, equalled only by the retention with which it preserved them. By the ease with which it is procured and inscribed, it rescued the ancient authors from the possibility of oblivion, and may strictly be said to have formed that monument more durable than brass, which a celebrated poet prophesied to himself with a confidence, justified at length by the accomplishment of his prediction.

No. CXXXVII. ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH LED TO THE DISCOVERY OF THE ART OF PRINTING, WITH MISCELLANEOUS REMARKS ON IT.

THE buſineſs of tranſcribing the remains of Grecian and Roman literature, became an uſeful, an innocent, and a pleaſing employ to many of thoſe who, in the dark ages, would elſe have pined in the liſtleſs languor of monaſtic retirement. Exempt from the avocations of civil life, incapable of literary exertion from the want of books and opportunities of improvement, they devoted the frequent intervals of religious duty, to the tranſcription of authors whom they often little underſtood. The ſervile office of a mere copyiſt was not diſdained by thoſe who knew not to invent; and the writers in the ſcriptorium were inſpired with an emulation to excel, in the beauty and variety of their illuminations, the fidelity of their copy and the multitude of their performances.

But when every letter of every copy was to be formed by the immediate operation of the hand, the moſt perſevering aſſiduity could effect but little. The books appear not to have been written with the rapidity of a modern tranſcriber, but with formal ſtiffneſs; or a correct elegance, equally inconſiſtent with expedition. They were therefore rare, and conſequently much valued, and whenever ſold, were ſold at a great price. Few, indeed, but crowned and mitred heads, or incorporated communities, were able to procure a number ſufficient to merit the appellation of a library; and even the boaſted libraries of princes and prelates, were ſuch as are now eaſily exceeded by every private collection. To be poor, with whatever ability or inclination, was, at one time, an inſurmountable obſtacle to literary improvement: and, perhaps, we indulge an unreaſonable acrimony in our general cenſure of monkiſh ſloth and ignorance, not conſidering that an involuntary fault ceaſes to be blameable; that ignorance, is neceſſary where the means of information are ſcarce; and that

ſloth is not to be avoided, where the requiſites of proper employment are not attainable without great expence, or earneſt ſolicitation.

It was, perhaps, leſs with a view to obviate theſe inconveniencies, than from the intereſted motives of deriving greater gain by exacting the uſual price for copies multiplied with more eaſe and expedition, that a new mode was at length practiſed, derived from the invention of the art of printing; a diſcovery which, of all thoſe recorded in civil hiſtory, is of the moſt important and extenſive conſequence.

That the firſt productions of the preſs were intended to paſs for manuſcripts, we are led to conclude from the reſemblance of the type to the written characters, from the omiſſion of illuminations, which were to be ſupplied by the pen to facilitate the deception, and from the inventor's concealment of his proceſs, ſo far as to incur ſuſpicion of witchcraft or magic, by which alone the firſt obſervers could account for the extraordinary multiplication of the tranſcripts.

But the deceit was ſoon detected. The perfect reſemblance in the ſhape of the letters, in the place and number of the words on every page the ſingular correctneſs, and, above all, the numerous copies of the ſame author, inevitably led to a diſcovery of the truth. To conceal it, indeed, was no longer deſired, when experience had ſuggeſted the great lucrative advantages, and the practicability of multiplying books without end by the proceſs newly invented. It ſoon appeared, though it was not obvious at firſt, that the new mode would be more agreeable to the reader, as well as eaſier to the copyiſt and that printed books would univerſally ſuperſede the uſe of manuſcripts, from a choice founded on judicious preference. The art was ſoon profeſſed as a trade and the buſineſs of copying, which had once afforded only amuſement or gain to the curious and the idle, became the conſtant employment and ſupport of a numerous tribe of artiſans, and conſtituted a very conſiderable ſource of mercantile advantage.

Of an art, which, though it had yet acquired but ſmall degrees of perfection appeared of moſt extenſive utility in

religion, in politics, in literature, and even in commerce, no labour has been spared to investigate the history; but, unfortunately, the enquirers into the origin of arts, instigated by the zeal of minute curiosity to push their researches too far, often discover them so rude, obvious, and inartificial at their commencement, as to reflect very little honour on those whom they ostentatiously exhibit as the earliest inventors. Such has been the result of the investigations of those who, dissatisfied with the commonly-received opinions on the date of the invention of printing, pretend to have discovered traces of it many years before the first production of Faustus, in 1457; and it is true, that the Speculum Salutis, and a few other books are extant, which are, on good reasons, judged to have been stamped, not printed *secundum artem*, long before the erection of a press at Mentz: but the mode in which they were executed, like the Chinese, bears but little resemblance to the art of printing, properly so called; it appears not by any historical memoir, to have suggested the first hint of it, and is too imperfect to deserve notice as even the infant state of this momentous invention.

National pride, like the pride of individuals, is often founded on slight or dubious pretensions. Thus have Germany and Holland contended, with all the warmth of party, for the imaginary honour of giving birth to the inventor of printing, who, after all, was probably led to the discovery, not by the enlarged views of public utility, but by fortunate circumstances concurring with the desire of private and pecuniary advantage: but though the history of printing, like all other histories, is in some degree obscure and doubtful at its earliest period; though Strasburg has boasted of Mentel, and Haarlem of Coster, as the inventor; yet is there great reason to conclude, that the few arguments advanced in their favour are supported only by forgery and falsehood: and we may safely assert, with the majority of writers, and with the general voice of Europe, that the time of the invention, was about the year 1440; the place Mentz, and the persons Guttenburg, Faustus, and Schaeffer, in conjunction.

He who wiſhes to trace the art in its gradual progreſs, from the wooden and immovable letter to the movable and metal type, and to the completion of the whole contrivance, will receive ſatisfactory information from the annals of the elaborate Mattaire. In the mean time, the eſſayiſt will avoid the repetition of facts already too well known and eſtabliſhed to admit additional illuſtration, and will think himſelf more properly employed in making reflections on the literary, the moral, the political, and the religious effects which have reſulted from the invention.

It is indeed, generally, true, that the hiſtory of a mechanical art affords but inſipid entertainment to a mind which is tinctured with liberality of philoſophy and the elegance of claſſical literature. It often exhibits manual excellence united with ſuch meanneſs of ſentiment, and vulgarity of manners, as unavoidably mingles diſguſt with admiration: but to the truth of this general remark, the annals of typography are a ſingular exception. Many are recorded to have laboured at the preſs, whoſe literary attainments would have done honour to the chair of a profeſſor. By their annotations, they illuſtrated the ſenſe and ſpirit of thoſe authors, the letter of whoſe writings they embelliſhed by the moſt beautiful and accurate impreſſions.

The names of the Aldi, of Robert and Henry Stephans, of Turnebus, and of many more who united mechanical ingenuity with profound erudition, will ever be remembered with reſpect and gratitude by the votary of ancient learning. Happily for letters, at a time when the valuable works of antiquity were contained in manuſcripts, ſometimes illegibly written, and often mutilated or corrupted, a number of men aroſe whoſe knowledge and ſagacity enabled them to aſcertain and exhibit, by the newly diſcovered art, the genuine reading. Such men were greater benefactors to mankind, than many who have been more celebrated; nor is it an ill-grounded glory which Italy derives from her Mantuii, Germany from her Froben, France from her Stephani, the Netherlands from their Plantin, and England from her Caxton.

Every lover of accurate editions looks back with regret on thoſe times when an Eraſmus corrected what an Aldus

printed; when, like the painter of antiquity, a printer expoſed his production to the paſſenger, and ſolicited cenſure; and when the legiſlature of a great nation provided by a ſtatute, with a penalty, for the correctneſs of publications.

To prefer, with implicit attachment, all the earlier productions of the art to the more recent, were to be actuated with the narrow ſpirit of a typographical virtuoſo; yet the truth is, what indeed was to be expected from the ſuperior learning of thoſe who were formerly concerned in the proceſs, they ſurpaſs the more ſplendid editions of later times, in the one great excellence of correctneſs. It is true, indeed, that the fungous production of the modern writer, appears with a ſplendour of paper, and brilliancy of type, unknown in the fifteenth century: and, if the work is written in the vernacular language, and on a familiar ſubject, is perhaps ſufficiently correct. It is true, likewiſe, that conſidering the expedition of the artiſan, the degree of correctneſs with which the common papers of intelligence appear, is really wonderful, and affords a ſtriking inſtance how much induſtry can effect, when ſtimulated to exertion by the hope of that abundant gain, which our more than Athenian love of political information conſtantly ſupplies. Of ſuch diſpatch, a Plantin would, perhaps, have denied the poſſibility. But books of learning, eſpecially when written in the dead languages, are more ſlowly brought forth, and by no means with equal perfection. The miſtaken avarice, the careleſs precipitation, and the groſs ignorance of ſome modern typographers, often fruſtrate all the paſt labour of correctors and commentators, who have toiled with aching eyes in the reviſal of proof ſheets, and in the collation of manuſcripts. The editions of Greek and Latin claſſics, produced within theſe few years from the Engliſh preſs, are deplorably incorrect, and ſeem to indicate a declenſion of an art which has afforded light and given honour to empires. The paper and the type are beautiful; but they are both ſpoiled by the want of learned and accurate correction. A corrector ſhould read with a microſcopic eye; and the reward of honour and emolument ſhould await his faithful labours. His work is the work of the head; the reſt is mechanical.

No. CXXXVIII. ON THE MORAL, POLITICAL, AND RELIGIOUS EFFECTS OF PRINTING; WITH CONCLUDING REMARKS.

BY one of thoſe laudable artifices which prevent private avarice from withholding public benefits, the art of printing was ſtolen from Haarlem, and brought to Oxford by Frederic Corſellis. But while we are conſidering the introduction of printing into England, not to commemorate the names of Bouchier, Turnour, and Caxton, who were moſt inſtrumental to it, would be an omiſſion equally negligent and ungrateful. Nor ſhould the tribute of praiſe be any longer withheld by neglect from earl Tiptoft and earl Rivers, who, at this period, were reſtorers and patrons of learning in our own country, and who contributed to its advancement, in imitation of their contemporary, Pius the Second in Italy, both by their munificence and example.

The literary advantages derived from the invention are ſo obvious, that to point them out with all the formality of diſquiſition is unneceſſary.

But the moraliſt, no leſs than the man of letters, finds himſelf intereſted in the conſequences reſulting from the mechanical mode of multiplying the copies of books. To this cauſe, he attributes that change in the manners and ſentiments which has taken place within the interval of a century or two, and which cannot eſcape even ſuperficial obſervation. Philoſophy, once preſerved among a choſen few, with the ſelfiſhneſs of an Alexander, who reprimanded Ariſtotle for divulging the ſecrets of ſcience, has now diffuſed its influence on the mean as well as the great, the gay and the fair as well as the ſevere and ſtudious, the merchant and the manufacturer, as well as the contemplative profeſſor. Pamphlets and manuals, on every ſubject of human enquiry, are circulated by the aſſiduous trader at a ſmall price among the loweſt ranks of the community, the greateſt part of whom have been furniſhed with the ability of reading by an eleemoſynary education. A tincture of

letters, which was once rare, and formed a ſhining character, has pervaded the maſs of the people, and in a free country like our own, where it is not checked in its operation by political reſtraints, has produced remarkable effects on the general ſyſtem of morality. Much good has reſulted from it: happy, if it had not been mixed with that characteriſtic alloy of human happineſs, much evil. Learning, thus communicated to the vulgar, has taught the ſavage ferocity of groſs ignorance to yield to gentleneſs and humanity; but it has alſo ſuperinduced a general indolence, refinement, and falſe delicacy. It has been the means of exhibiting, to the beſt advantage, the image of virtue in her natural beauty; but it has alſo held up to view the meretricious charms of vice in the falſe ornaments ſuperadded by a corrupt imagination. It has been a ſteady light to lighten men in the path of truth; but it has alſo been a meteor leading them into the mazes of error, and plunging them at laſt into the depths of miſery. If it has often tempted us to boaſt of living in an enlightened age, it has no leſs frequently induced us to regret the old times of ignorant, but innocent ſimplicity. If we ſometimes look back with a mixture of ſcorn and pity on the unlettered ages that preceded us; we alſo ſometimes confeſs ourſelves ready to renounce the pride of ſuperior knowledge for the ſolid happineſs of that national probity, which, though it may not have receded, has not kept pace with our progreſs in ſcientific improvement. Here, however, the old maxim will be ſuggeſted to every one, that a good argument againſt the uſe of a thing, cannot be drawn from its abuſe. It will at the ſame time be remembered, that the preſent times are ever ſeen through the fallacious mediums of prejudice and paſſion; and that the cenſures of the ſatiriſt may not ariſe from real degeneracy, but that common propenſity which has, in all ages, given riſe to invectives againſt the prevailing manners. If it is true, that improvement in knowledge is a natural and laudable object of human deſire, the more general that improvement, the happier and more perfect is human nature, and the more eſtimable that art from which it is principally derived.

But however equivocal the effects of the univerſal diſ-

ſemination of literature on the morals of thoſe who cannot judge and ſelect with the ſame eaſe with which they can procure books, there is no doubt of their being beneficial among others, whoſe judgment is directed by liberal culture, and whoſe ſentiments are undepraved by faſhionable diſſipation. Before the introduction of printing, the ſtudent, who revolted at the idea of languiſhing in the ſloth of monkery, had ſcarcely any ſcope for his induſtry and talents, but in the puerile perplexities of a ſcholaſtic philoſophy, as little adapted to call forth the virtues of the heart, as to promote valuable knowledge: but ſince that important æra in the annals of learning, every individual, even the pooreſt of the Muſes' train, has been enabled to obtain, without difficulty, the works of thoſe great maſters in practical and ſpeculative ethics, the Greek and Roman philoſophers. He is taught by the ſame inſtructors who formed a Xenophon and a Scipio, and can hold converſe, in the retirements of his chamber, with the celebrated ſages of antiquity, with nearly the ſame advantages as if he actually ſat with Socrates beneath the ſhade of the plane-tree, walked with Plato in the Lyceum, or accompanied Cicero to his Tuſculan villa.

Whatever tends to diffuſe new light on the underſtandings of a whole people, or to effect a change in the general ſyſtem of manners, ſoon produces a ſimilar revolution in their political character. Airy fabrics, which, when ſeen through the miſts of ignorance, were ſuppoſed to be realities, vaniſhed at the light of learning, as the inchantment is diſſolved by the operation of the taliſman. The ſun of ſcience aroſe, the proſpect cleared around, and they who had ſhuddered at the ideal phantoms of the night, ventured to walk forth and examine every object that ſolicited attention. The prejudices on the ſubject of civil government, formed by ignorance, and foſtered by the policy of power, when once the art of printing had multiplied books, and roufed the ſpirit of enquiry, ſoon gave way to the dictates of inſtructed reaſon. The natural rights of mankind became well underſtood, the law of nations was attended to, implicit obedience was neither exacted on the one part with the ſame rigour as before, nor paid on the other with equal

ſervility. What remained of the feudal inſtitutions could not long ſubſiſt, when more liberal ideas of the nearer equality of mankind were imbibed from books, and when a great degree of dignity and power was attainable, not only by birth and riches, but by mere literary eminence. The diſtinction of vaſſal and lord ſoon ceaſed to be the only one in the community, when men were led, by the eaſe with which books were procured, to aſpire after the fine arts, philoſophy, and erudition. Such ſtudies infuſed a noble generoſity of ſpirit, which ſcorned to pay an abject homage to ignorant opulence. Ignorant opulence, indeed, could not maintain, or even exact by force, that truly valuable reſpect which is naturally due, and cheerfully paid, to perſonal dignity. Men, by reading, were led to reflect, and by reflection diſcovered that they had been under an error when they looked up to their governors as to a ſuperior order of beings; but at the ſame time they learned the happineſs of living under a well-regulated conſtitution, the duty of obedience in return for protection, and the political neceſſity of ſubordination. Hiſtory, and treatiſes of politics, ſuggeſted juſt notions of civil ſociety, and a ſenſe of expediency produced at length that voluntary acquieſcence which was once exacted by pretenſions to divine right, or by the immediate interpoſition of authority. The luſt of dominion, which diſgraced the iron reign of the ſullen and unlettered tyrant, was ſucceeded, in the enlightened father of his people, by a ſpirit of benevolence and philoſophical moderation. That power, which was once placed on the ſandy foundation of popular prejudice and fear, when thoſe fears and prejudices were diſſipated by free diſquiſition, acquired an eſtabliſhment on the baſis of reaſon. Nor let it be deemed idle ſpeculation to attribute theſe ſalutary conſequences, to the invention of printing, ſince to him who attentively conſiders all its remote as well as proximate effects, it will appear fully adequate to their production. When all ranks of people on a ſudden were enabled to exert with vigour the faculty of accurate and comprehenſive thought, which had only lain dormant for want of opportunity, the effect on the moral and political world muſt be as ſtriking, as that which takes place in the phyſical, at the return of day after night, and ſpring after winter.

Thus has Fauſtus and Mentz, by an art invented and exerciſed with views of private emolument, ultimately contributed more to the empires, and cauſed more important events in their hiſtory, than all the efforts of the renowned conquerors and lawgivers of antiquity. That the ſame art which has produced theſe ſalutary conſequences, has alſo been the means of encouraging licentiouſneſs, of animating ſedition, and kindling the flames of civil war, is to be attributed to that lamentable condition of human affairs which is obſerved to counterbalance every good with a proportion of concomitant evil.

To the art of printing, however, it is acknowledged, we owe the reformation. It has been juſtly remarked that if the books of Luther had been multiplied only by the ſlow proceſs of the hand-writing, they muſt have been few, and would have been eaſily ſuppreſſed by the combination of wealth and power: but, poured forth in abundance from the preſs, they ſpread over the land with the rapidity of an inundation, which acquires additional force from the efforts uſed to obſtruct its progreſs. He who undertook to prevent the diſperſion of the books once iſſued from the preſs, attempted a taſk no leſs arduous than the deſtruction of the Hydra. Reſiſtance was vain, and religion was reformed: and we who are chiefly intereſted in this happy revolution muſt remember, amidſt the praiſes beſtowed on Luther, that his endeavours had been ineffectual, unaſſiſted by the invention of Fauſtus.

How greatly the cauſe of religion has been promoted by the art, muſt appear, when it is conſidered, that it has placed thoſe ſacred books in the hand of every individual, which, beſides that they were once locked up in a dead language, could not be procured without great difficulty. The numerous comments on them of every kind, which tend to promote piety, and to form the Chriſtian philoſopher, would probably never have been compoſed, and certainly would not have extended their beneficial influence, if typography had ſtill been unknown. By that art, the light, which is to illuminate a dark world, has been placed in a ſituation more advantageous to the emiſſion of its rays: but if it has been the means of illuſtrating the doctrines,

and enforcing the practice of religion, it has also, particularly in the present age, struck at the root of piety and moral virtue, by propagating opinions favourable to the sceptic and the voluptuary. It has enabled modern authors wantonly to gratify their avarice, their vanity, and their misanthrophy, in disseminating novel systems subversive of the dignity and happiness of human nature: but though the perversion of the art is lamentably remarkable in those volumes which issue, with offensive profusion, from the vain the wicked, and the hungry, yet this good results from the evil, that as truth is great and will prevail, she must derive fresh lustre, by displaying the superiority of her strength in the conflict with sophistry.

Thus the art of printing, in whatever light it is viewed, has deserved respect and attention. From the ingenuity of the contrivance, it has ever excited mechanical curiosity; from its intimate connection with learning, it has justly claimed historical notice; and from its extensive influence on morality, politics and religion, it is now become a subject of very important speculation.

But however we may felicitate mankind on the invention, there are perhaps those who wish, that, together with its compatriot art of manufacturing gun-powder, it had not yet been brought to light. Of its effects on literature, they assert, that it has increased the number of books, till they distract, rather than improve the mind; and of its malignant influence on morals they complain, that it has often introduced a false refinement, incompatible with the simplicity of primitive piety and genuine virtue. With respect to its literary ill consequence, it may be said, that though it produces to the world an infinite number of worthless publications, yet true wit and fine composition will still retain their value, and it will be an easy task for critical discernment to select these from the surrounding mass of absurdity: and though with respect to its moral effects, a regard to truth extorts the confession that it has diffused immorality and irreligion, divulged with cruel impertinence the secrets of private life, and spread the tale of scandal through an empire yet these are evils which will either shrink away unobserved in the triumphs of time and truth over falsehood, or

which may, at any time be suppressed by legislative interposition.

The *liberty of the press* is a subject not to be touched upon, but with a trembling caution. Every student must abhor the thought of erecting the tribunal of a star-chamber in the republic of letters: every lover of his country must reject with disdain the proposal of silencing the voice of truth by the menace of authority: but, at the same time, every true friend to learning and mankind, who, free from the enthusiasm of party, understands their real interest, would rejoice to see the day when the advantages of the liberty of the press shall be unalloyed with those evils of its licentiousness, which, without some expedient of controul, will prevail as long as there are, on one hand, indigent and avaricious publishers, and, on the other, factious and unprincipled readers.

But innovations in a particular intimately connected with civil liberty, will ever be guarded against in a free country, with all the vigilance of jealous circumspection. Men will often patiently support the present evil, the nature and extent of which is ascertained by experience, rather than incur the hazard of a future detriment, which may possibly outweigh the beneficial ends proposed. If then the unrestrained use of the press is, as it has been commonly termed, the palladium of liberty, may it never be taken from us by fraud or force; and perhaps the evils resulting from the abuse of this privilege are of that kind, which, when permitted to take their course, ultimately remedy themselves: for it is certain, that there may be a period, and perhaps our own times approach to it, when the petulant licentiousness of public prints and pamphlets becomes too contemptible to gain attention, and therefore fails of producing a malignant effect. Avarice will cease to publish, when men are too wise to purchase; faction and vanity will be silent, when they no longer find an audience; but penal and coercive measures are known to give weight to the nonsense of sedition and impiety, by alarming that attention which it could not otherwise excite, and to occasion the evils intended to be obviated as the means used to extinguish a flame sometimes increase its violence.

But referring the discussion of this complicated subject to legislative wisdom, we may venture to express an honest wish without danger of presumption; and surely all the good and enlightened part of mankind will sympathize in the desire, that the time will not be distant, when the qualities of the heart shall be cultivated with the same general ardour as the powers of the understanding; when the affectation of singularity, and the love of money, shall no longer multiply treatises tending to teach the people a false philosophy, an erroneous belief, or a factious conduct; when the art of printing shall no more be perverted to embellish vice and justify folly, but operating in the accomplishment of its proper purposes, at once promote the interest, which cannot indeed without natural violence be separate, of sound learning and unaffected virtue.

No. CXXXIX. CURSORY THOUGHTS ON SATIRE AND SATIRISTS.

THE good reception that species of poetry called satire has commonly met with in the world, is perhaps owing to some dispositions in the human nature not the most amiable. It derives not its power of pleasing, like other poetry, from its effects on the imagination. It raises few enchanting prospects; it is not necessarily employed in fiction. A spirit of indignation is its essential principle, and by causing a similar spirit in the reader, it gently gratifies the irascible passions.

It must be owned, that it has seldom answered its ostensible end of reforming the age. Yet allowing it to be of little use in reformation, it is often composed with such evident marks of genius as render it interesting to men of taste. And though spleen may have given rise to its first production, and the love of censure insured its success, yet the beauties of the composition will cause it to be read, even by those who disapprove personal invective, long after the resentment that occasioned it has subsided.

Horace, the politest writer whom the world ever produced,

adopted ſatirical writing, and ſucceeded in it, though there is every reaſon to believe that his natural diſpoſition was not ſevere. The truth is, he was a man of the world, as well as a man of reflection, and wrote his remarks on men and things in familiar verſe: not without cenſuring them indeed, but without indulging the aſperity of ſarcaſm. He probed every wound with ſo gentle a hand, that the patient ſmiled under the operation. The gay friend of Mæcenas had lived in courts, and knew too much of the world to think he could reform the voluptuous part of it by abrupt ſeverity.

Not ſo the ſtern Juvenal. With all the warmth of a zealot in the cauſe of virtue, he pours his majeſtic verſe, and, amid the moſt ſpirited invective and the fineſt morality, emits many a luminous irradiation of poetry beautifully deſcriptive.

His predeceſſor Perſius had afforded him a noble model. He improved on it in nothing but perſpicuity. Perſius is all fire, ſpirit, animation. The frequency of his interrogations rouſes the attention of the reader, and it is not eaſy to read and underſtand him without catching the glow with with which he evidently wrote. If his obſurity roſe from fear, it does not indeed depreciate his merit as a writer; but it has cauſed him to be leſs read and admired than he deſerves. The laſt lines of his ſecond ſatire are alone ſufficient to entitle him to immortality.

The Engliſh ſeem to have copied the manner of Juvenal rather than of Horace. Our national ſpirit is indeed of the manly and rougher kind, and feels ſomething congenial with itſelf in the vehemence of the indignant Juvenal.

The Roman is remarkably harmonious. But Donne, his imitator, ſeems to have thought roughneſs of verſe, as well as of ſentiment, a real grace. It is ſcarcely poſſible, that a writer who did not ſtudiouſly avoid a ſmooth verſification, could have written ſo many lines without ſtumbling on a good one. Pope has revived his fame by attuning his harſh numbers; a work whoſe very excellence makes us regret that a genius ſo fertile as was the bard's of Twickenham, ſhould have waſted its vigour in paraphraſes and tranſlations.

This verſatile poet has imbibed the very ſpirit of Horace.

Nor can the mere Engliſh reader obtain, by the tranſlations of Creech or of Francis, ſo clear and adequate an idea of the true Horatian manner, as from the liberal imitations of Pope.

Dryden ſeems to have preferred the model of his favourite Juvenal. His nervous line was well adapted to ſatirical compoſition. He ſays himſelf, "he could write "ſeverely, with more eaſe than he could write gently." His Abſalom and Achitophel, and his Mac Flecknoe, are maſter-pieces and models in the ſerious and vehement kind of ſatire.

Boileau ſeems to have blended with judgment the manner of Horace and Juvenal. Yet whatever degree of elegance he poſſeſſes, the natural monotony of French verſes tires an ear accuſtomed to the various harmony of our Engliſh poets. The French language never appears ſo mean as in the heroic couplet. He who reads the Henriade, and at the ſame time thinks of Milton, Dryden, Garth, or Pope, muſt cloſe the volume with all the loathing of diſguſt. He who reads Boileau, will find his improving imitator Pope, riſe in his opinion. Pope rouſes the attention by all the changes of muſical modulation; Boileau ſooths it to dull repoſe by the lullaby of ſimilar pauſes uniformly repeated.

A poet of our own, little attended to at preſent, once enjoyed a very high degree of fame as a ſatirical writer. Oldham has been called the Engliſh Juvenal. His ſatire on the Jeſuits has indeed much of the ſpirit of Juvenal. It diſplays wit, force, pungency, and very copious invention; but it is no leſs diſtinguiſhed by a vulgarity, which muſt prevent Oldham from keeping his place among the claſſics of our country. He has laſhed the Jeſuits with deſerved and unrelenting rigour; but though ſevere puniſhment is often neceſſary, yet to ſee it inflicted with the wanton cruelty of an aſſaſſin, is not agreeable. There are ſome work of poetry, as well as of painting, which, though well performed as pieces of art, loſe the praiſe their excellence demands, by the ſhocking nature of their repreſentations.

A later ſatiriſt, Dr. Young, is ſtill read with pleaſure. But he has the fault of Seneca, of Ovid, of Cowley; a pro-

ſuſe and unſeaſonable application of wit. His ſatires have been juſtly called a ſtring of epigrams. A lover of originality, he did not regard models. Had he endeavoured to imitate Juvenal or Perſius he would have avoided this fault. Thoſe great maſters were too much engroſſed by the importance of their ſubjects to fall into the puerility of witticiſm. There is alſo ſomething in Young's verſification which a good ear does not approve.

But even Young, popular as he was, has been eclipſed by a poet who has ſhone with the effulgence and the inſtability of a meteor. Churchill poſſeſſed merit; a merit which was magnified, when ſeen through the medium of party, beyond that degree which it was able to ſupport. When reaſon at laſt viewed what paſſion had exaggerated, ſhe was diſguſted with the diſappointment, and turned away with neglect. Thus the celebrated Churchill, with whoſe aplauſe the town re-echoed, is ſinking to an oblivion which he hardly deſerves; for though he wrote many careleſs lines and many dull paſſages, yet the greater part of his productions diſplayed a genuine vein of ſatirical genius.

Within a few years ſatire has re-aſſumed her original rude form of ſcurrilous and petulant abuſe. An improved verſification has given a gloſs to illiberal, calumnious, and anonymous invectives. An undaunted effrontery, recommended by elegant verſe, has ſupplied the want of every claſſical and noble ornament. That it has been well received is no proof of its ſolid excellence as compoſition, ſince, to the greater part of readers, the abuſe which it laviſhly pours on public and private characters, is a ſufficient recommendation.

It differs from claſſical ſatire in this as well as other circumſtances. Horace, Perſius, Juvenal, though ſometimes diſgraced by obſcenity, yet abound with fine moral ſentiments. They not only put vice to ſhame, but countenanced virtue, and pointed out the way to attain to it. But the ſatiriſts of our times ſeem to have little elſe in view than to gratify private pique, or party prejudice. It is indeed ſcarcely to be expected, that in a degenerate age, many will be found to poſſeſs dignity of character and ſolidity of judgment, in a degree ſufficient to enable them to ſtand forth diſintereſted and efficient cenſures of prevailing folly and faſhionable vice.

No. CXL. ON LOGIC AND METAPHYSICS.

TO falſe and careleſs reaſoning moſt of the misfortunes of life are to be attributed. Logic then, as an art, is perhaps ſo far uſeful in the conduct of life, as it ſuperinduces a habit of accurate reaſoning.

But what ſays experience? Is the man who has digeſted Burgerſdicius found to be wiſer in his actions than others? The beſt diſputant that ever conquered in the ſchools, when he has deſcended to the walks of common life, has been found no leſs prone to deviate into the paths of error, to be involved in the clouds of paſſion, and miſled by the falſe lights of imagination, than the buſy multitude who never heard of the categories.

They who poſſeſs common ſenſe in a competent degree, will diſcover, with no other aid, the fallacy of wrong reaſoning. They who are deficient in it, will not find a ſubſtitute in the uſe of a ſyllogiſm.

The great numbers who ſupply civil and and commerical offices, in which there is a conſtant neceſſity for the exertion of reaſon, and who conduct the moſt important affairs without the aid of ſcholaſtic logic, are proofs that vigorous nature wants not this ſlender aſſiſtance. To imagine that a well-formed mind cannot reaſon well without logic, is no leſs abſurd, than to ſuppoſe that the ſolid oak wants the ſupport of the ivy that creeps around it.

The beſt ſchool for the improvement of reaſon, after a competent education, is the living world. We find even the illiterate, who have ſpent their lives in conſtant action, poſſeſſing a very extenſive knowledge of things, and a moſt accurate method of judging of them; a knowledge and a method which the cultivated but inexperienced reaſoner can ſeldom attain. It is common to ſee the learned academic, whoſe labours are at laſt rewarded by a rural benefice, unable notwithſtanding his acquired ſtrength of reaſon, to cope with the rude ruſtic in a bargain for dues. which the laws have allotted him.

It seems then, that the gradual decay of scholastic logic, and the contempt in which syllogistic skill is held, are not unreasonable. It contributes little to the benefit of society. It is rather injurious to it, by drawing off that attention which might be usefully bestowed. What then shall we say? Must an art, which our forefathers have studied from age to age, and to which many of us have devoted our first years at the universities, be exploded? A veneration is due to long established opinions. The powers of judging, which stimulate the present age to innovation, were possessed by the past in equal perfection. They had some reason for their institutions. The same reason may perhaps remain to prevent the total abolition of them; for truth and reason are unchangeable. Our ancestors established logical studies in the universities, because in there days their were few other books to be obtained, and no other learning was prized. Their descendants must continue to bestow on them a moderate attention, because every part of knowledge contributes to accomplish the professed scholar. But they need give no more than a moderate attention, because the improvements of philosophy, and the great multiplication of books in every part of human learning, enable the student to spend his time, and exercise his sagacity more usefully and more agreeably.

He who possesses the genius and taste, together with the philosophical spirit of the Attic Harris, will do right to cultivate them by studying the unread works of ancient logicians. Our English Aristotle, whose productions are at once the quintessence of elegance, and prodigies of analytical ingenuity, has pointed out flowers in those paths of learning, where thorns only were seen before. The Stagyrite was literally idolized; and had it been the fate of Harris to have lived a few centuries ago, he also would have been honoured with a subordinate deification. If any thing can restore a taste for these languishing studies, it is the grace which his style and his accuracy have given them.

For metaphysics what can be said? If every book that has been written on them, and thousands have been writtenwere annihilated, not a single individual in the great community

of all mankind, would in any one reſpect have juſt reaſon to lament the loſs. Mathematical and arithmetical ſtudies are ſpeculative, it is true; but they do not terminate in ſpeculation. They afford a great pleaſure, abſtractedly conſidered, by the full evidence with which they diſplay their truths; but they tend to obvious utility as well as to delight. The builder, the navigator, almoſt every mechanic art, is aſſiſted by geometry, and all men, without exception, are benefited by arithmetic. But metaphyſics tend only to benight the underſtanding in a cloud of its own making, to loſe it in a labyrinth of its own contrivance.

Metaphyſics were once encouraged and cultivated becauſe they ſerved the purpoſes of ſuperſtition. They involved theological ſubjects in a perplexity which the ſimple could not unravel. They gave an air of myſtery and depth, which caught the admiration of the vulgar. They are now employed, in a ſimilar manner, in the ſervice of infidelity. They have induced the half-learned and the conceited, thoſe who think they underſtand them, and thoſe who wiſh to be thought by others to underſtand them, to adopt, without, being apprehenſive of danger, opinions fatal to their own happineſs and to the exiſtence of ſociety.

Even when cultivated by the honeſt and truly ingenious, they exhibit an inſtance of blameable pride. They aim at a ſcience to which man can never attain. It is truly laughable, to obſerve a creature with hardly knowledge enough of the things around him to guide him with ſafety, perplexing himſelf with ontological enquiries into the nature of angels, and the eſſence of the devil.

The ontologiſts and pneumatologiſts, the *nominales* and *reales*, the *doctores ſeraphici*, and all the tribe of microſcopic philoſophers, are, in the preſent age of diſcernment totally neglected. Even Malebranche and Locke, the moſt rational of the metaphyſicians, are daily loſing ground. As a taſk, they are attended to in public ſeminaries, where ſome obſolete plan of ſtudy requires metaphyſical exerciſes; but the multitude of more agreeable works ſeldom leave time or inclination, to the ſtudent who is at liberty to chuſe his books, for the controverſy concerning innate ideas. A few, however, in the preſent times, have been ſo unfortu-

nate, as to waſte their labour in defending materialiſm, in expatiating on liberty and neceſſity, in diffuſing ſcepticiſm, and in proving that man is no more than an animal. This laſt ſentence and this doctrine may probably induce them to prove, in their own inſtances, that man is an *irritable animal*.

Such miſerable effects of metaphyſical reſearch have induced an amiable writer, whoſe heart and abilities vie with each other for excellence, to vindicate the nature and immutability of truth, to expoſe the futility of metaphyſics, to confound the devices of their patrons, and to eſtabliſh the natural rights of common ſenſe. This formidable champion has given the laſt fatal blow to languiſhing ſophiſtry; a blow which that ſhe may never recover, every man muſt wiſh, who knows the baneful influence of a Hume's dark inventions, and who deſires to counteract it.

To put an end to ſpeculative error, it might, perhaps, in ſome degree, be effectual to lay leſs ſtreſs upon metaphyſics in academical education. Thoſe who preſide over our ſeminaries are no leſs liberal than enlightened, and will ſurely, on ſome future day, if any part of the preſent ſyſtem of inſtruction is trifling or pernicious, renounce it with alacrity. But a proper deference to their reſpectable opinions renders it reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that an attention to this abſtruſe, though otherwiſe uſeleſs ſcience, may tend to give the young mind a habit of thinking with depth and preciſion. As a ſevere diſcipline, it may be advantageous. Many a manœuvre is taught the ſoldier in his courſe of preparation for war, which will ſeldom be uſeful in the field of battle.

All thoſe who have little opportunity of being actively ſerviceable to others, have an unqueſtionable right to ſeek amuſement in abſtruſe ſpeculation, or in any other paſtime which is innocent. They may puzzle themſelves for diverſion even in metaphyſics. But if, in the courſe of their enquiries, they ſhould fall upon a wonderful diſcovery, which, when divulged, would diſturb the happy ignorance of mankind, let them for once be ſelfiſh, enjoy it in private, and withhold it from the community.

No CXLI. ON LATIN VERSE AS AN EXERCISE AT SCHOOLS.

NO part of classical education has been more generally censured and more firmly adhered to, than that of exercising boys in the composition of Latin poetry. The trite remark, that a poet is born, and not formed by discipline, has been urged against it. It has also been alleged, that the time bestowed on it would be more advantageously spent in the study of things, and in acquiring a right method of expressing our sentiments in humble prose. It is absurd enough, say the objectors, to exact a certain portion of English verse from the scholar; but to perplex him with Latin verse, at a time when he might be learning a thousand useful things; what is it but extreme imprudence, countenanced indeed by general practice, but nevertheless both culpable and truly ridiculous?

They allow, however, that the custom is general, and of long duration. Surely then that degree of respect is due to the general opinion of mankind, and to the wisdom of our predecessors, which leads us to presume, that there must have been some benefit perceived by experience from an institution thus ancient and universal. And it is natural to consider, whether a few arguments may not be found in favour of a mode silently and uniformly pursued, amid the loud clamour every where raised against it.

The defenders of practices unjustly censured often do an injury to their cause, by admitting none of the objections to be reasonable. We will then allow, that to learn to make Latin verse is to lose time, when the scholar is destined to spend his life in commerical or in mechanical employments. But at the same time, we must insist on its utility to the man of independent fortune, to the divine, the lawyer, the physician, and perhaps to the accomplished military commander.

To all these, an acquaintance with the classics will add an elegance, such as tends to complete their characters as

gentlemen as well as ſcholars. It is the finiſhing poliſh of education, and operates on the mind, like dancing on the perſon, by ſuperadding a graceful habit. But there is no method ſo well calculated to infuſe an intimate knowledge of an author, as to imitate and endeavour to rival his excellencies. To write Virgilian verſe with true elegance, it is neceſſary to commit to memory every phraſe; to catch the very ſpirit of Virgil; to mark the varied pauſes of his verſes, the length of his periods, the peculiar grace of his expreſſions; and to give the whole compoſition a majeſtic dignity. All theſe requiſites to poetical compoſition in Latin, can only be acquired by a frequent and attentive peruſal of the noble Mantuan.

The firſt-fruits of genius produced by the fineſt writers that adorn our annals, were compoſitions in Latin verſe, Milton, at a boyiſh age, wrote it with great elegance. Cowley excelled in it early. Addiſon was much celebrated for his juvenile eſſays in it. Prior began with writing Latin epigrams. All the great men who have been educated at public ſchools, where it is invariably an exerciſe, were, during ſeveral years, obliged to compoſe it as a daily taſk; and though many of them were never diſtinguiſhed in poetry, yet they derived conſiderable advantages from the attempt, as will probably appear from the following reflections.

Difficulty is naturally painful; but to overcome it cauſes a very ſenſible pleaſure and facilitates future conqueſts, by adding courage. To write Latin verſe, is certainly an arduous taſk to a young boy; but the authority of his maſter, and a ſpirit of emulation, urge him to attempt with alacrity what his own indolence would have led him to neglect. Long practice gives facility. He finds he has overcome what he once thought inſurmountable. When any new undertaking offers itſelf in future with a difficult and forbidding aſpect, he is not affrighted; for he recollects, that he has already performed that which appeared to him impracticable. The exertion neceſſary to accompliſh what is not eaſy, has a natural tendency to give the mind freſh vigour.

A ſubject taken from a claſſic, a moral ſentiment, or an

ingenious remark, is given to a boy as a subject of meditation to employ his leisure during the intervals of school. He is taught, that there must be an unity in his design; that he must invent a thought, on which he is to display, if he can, good sense and Augustan wit, expressed in the most elegant versification. This tends to give a knowledge of things, at the same time that it renders it necessary to call to his assistance all his classical phraseology. He must revolve many ideas in his mind before this thought occurs. In this process he exercises the powers of judgment, of discrimination, of taste. He recollects all his reading, he reviews all he has seen and heard, he searches his books on similar topics, and at once improves what he has obtained, and makes new acquisitions.

He who has been conversant in great schools will have seen copies of verses written as the exercises of an evening, in which were displayed wit, humour, fine language, ingenious turns harmonious verse, and very shrewd observations on men and things. Such were the Lusus Westmonasterienses; such were many in the Musæ Etonenses, and such are thousands that have never yet been offered to the public view. It is a known truth, that many of the boys who were engaged in these useful sports of a fertile genius, afterwards became distinguished members of the literary or the political republic; and they owed much of that good reception which they met with in the world, to the fame and merit of classical scholarship, acquired at their school.

Every liberal scholar desires to extend his views, and to be enabled to derive literary pleasure from all that is capable of affording it. If he has formed no taste for modern Latin poetry, he will be a stranger to many most pleasing productions. But he cannot have a just relish for them, unless he has a knowledge of prosody, and of their various metres; and of these he can seldom have a perfect knowledge, such a knowledge as will enable him to judge of their finer graces, without having composed Latin poetry as an exercise.

It is certain, that none of the modern Latinists have equalled Virgil and Horace, and that the classical student can no where find entertainment so unmixed as in their

original writings. But the daintieſt fare that an Apicius ever invented, ceaſed to pleaſe when conſtantly repeated. Nor can he be ſaid to have an undiſtinguiſhing taſte, or a coarſe appetite, who ſeeks variety in the writing of the Virgilian Vida, and in the ſweet ſtrains of our own Vincent Bourne. There is often a happy union of the beauties that diſtinguiſhed Ovid, Tibullus, and Martial, in the Carmina Quadrageſimalia. Rapin, Vanier, Buchanan, and Browne, ſeem to have written Latin verſe with an eaſe, which would almoſt lead to a ſuppoſition than Latin was their vernacular language. In miſcellaneous publications of our own and other nations, the man of taſte will find a multitude of poëmatia, which he may read with pleaſure, and without danger of corrupting the purity of his ſtyle.

Merely as the means of enjoying a ſweet and innocent pleaſure in greater perfection, of filling up a leiſure hour with an elegant amuſement, the compoſition of Latin verſe may be juſtly recommended to the affluent and the generous youth, who enjoys, and knows how to value, a liberal education. Others, it muſt be owned, will be much better employed in learning their pence-table.

No. CXLII. ON THE INSENSIBILITY OF THE MEN TO THE CHARMS OF A FEMALE MIND CULTIVATED WITH POLITE AND SOLID LITERATURE. IN A LETTER.

SIR,

I AM the only daughter of a clergyman, who, on the death of my mother, which happened when I was about three years old, concentered his affections on me, and thought he could not diſplay his love more effectually than in giving me a good education. His houſe was ſituated in a ſolitary village, and he had but little parochial duty, ſo that there was ſcarcely any thing to divert his attention from this object. He had ever been devoted to letters, and conſidered learning, next to virtue, as the nobleſt diſtinction of human nature.

As ſoon as I could read, I was initiated in Lilly's Gram-

mar, and before I was eight years old, could repeat every rule in it with the greateſt accuracy. I was taught indeed all kinds of needle work; but two hours in every day were invariably ſet apart for my improvement in Latin. I ſoon perfected myſelf in the elementary parts, and had read Phædrus and Cornelius Nepos with a ſtrict attention to the grammatical conſtruction of every word and phraſe which they contained. From theſe I was advanced to Virgil and Horace. Under the direction of ſo good a claſſic as my father, I ſoon acquired a taſte for their beauties, and not only read them through with great delight, but committed their more beautiful paſſages to memory.

My father was ſo well pleaſed with my proficiency, and with the taſk of inſtructing the object of his tendereſt love, that he reſolved to carry my improvements higher, and to open to my view the ſpacious fields or Grecian literature. The Greek Grammar I maſtered with great eaſe, and I found a ſweetneſs in the language which amply repaid me for the little difficulties I ſometimes encountered. From the Greek Teſtament I proceeded to the Cyropædia of Xenophon, the Orations of Demoſthenes, the Dialogues of Plato, and the Iliad and Odyſſey of Homer. That I received great improvement from this courſe, cannot be denied; but the pleaſure of it alone was to me a ſufficient reward. I was enabled to drink at the fountain-head, while others were obliged to content themſelves with the diſtant and polluted ſtream. I found that no tranſlations whatever, however accurately they might exhibit the ſenſe of originals, could expreſs the beauties of the language. I was poſſeſſed of a power of inſpecting thoſe volumes, in admiration of which the world has long agreed, but from which my ſex has been for the moſt part unreaſonably excluded. It was a noble privilege, and I value myſelf upon it; but I hope and believe I did not deſpiſe thoſe who had not partaken of it ſolely for want of opportunities.

The French and Italian languages became eaſy after my acquaintance with the Latin, and my father was of opinion that they are indiſpenſably neceſſary to the modern ſcholar. In French I read Rollin, Boileau, Fontenelle, Voiture, Bouhours, Bruyere, Rouſſeau, Voltaire, and Marmontel;

in Italian, Petrarch, Taſſo, Arioſto, Guicciardin, and the Cortegiano of Caſtiglione. All theſe gave me a degree of pleaſure, which I am ſure none would be without who are capable of obtaining it.

After having laid a foundation in the languages, which I believe is ſeldom done with ſucceſs but at an early age, my father allowed me to feaſt without controul on the productions of my own country. The learning I had acquired enabled me to read them critically, and to underſtand all their alluſions. The beſt writers abound ſo much in quotations, that I cannot help thinking that they who are unacquainted with the ancient languages, muſt often be mortified at their inability to unlock the concealed treaſure.

All the claſſical poets, from Shakeſpeare to Pope, were my ſtudy and delight. Hiſtory, which my father always recommended as peculiarly ſuited to adorn the female mind, was a favourite purſuit. I digeſted Hume and Robertſon, and took a pleaſure in every biographical anecdote I could collect. After reading a life, or the hiſtory of any particular event, I was always deſired by my father to give my ſentiments upon it in writing; an exerciſe which I found to be attended with great advantage.

I never penetrated deeply into the ſciences, yet I could not reſt ſatisfied without a ſuperficial knowledge of aſtronomy, of the ſolar ſyſtem, of experimental philoſophy, and of geography, mathematical, phyſical, and political. This little was neceſſary for rational converſation, and I had neither time nor taſte for ſcientific refinements. Poetry was my delight, and I ſometimes wrote it, as the partiality of my poor father led him to aſſert, in a pleaſing manner.

I do not make it a merit of my own, becauſe it was entirely owing to my father's direction, that with all my attention to books I did not neglect the ornamental accompliſhments. My father excelled in muſic, and he taught me to play on the harpſichord. He engaged a good maſter to inſtruct me in dancing, and he always cautioned me againſt that neglect of dreſs and of accurate cleanlineſs, which, he ſaid, had ſometimes involved literary ladies in deſerved diſgrace. He likewiſe inculcated the neceſſity of avoiding a pedantic manner of converſation, and ſtrictly

charged me never to be overbearing, or to shew in the company of others the least appearance of conscious superiority. I believe I may venture to say, that I complied with his directions, and that I talked with perfect ease among the superficial, and neither expressed nor felt contempt, except where vanity and affectation were combined with ignorance.

Yet, notwithstanding my improvements, and my earnest endeavours to prevent them from becoming invidious, I find myself received in the world with less cordiality than I had reason to expect. My own sex stand too much in awe of me to bear me any affection. When I come into their company, an universal silence would prevail, if it were not interrupted by myself. Though I cannot say that I am treated rudely, yet I can easily perceive that the civilities I receive are constrained; and I have every reason to believe, that no small pains are taken to traduce my character, and to ridicule my taste in dress, and all the circumstances of external behaviour. It is kindly hinted, that a little awkwardness and impropriety may be excused in a learned lady, and that dress and decorum are beneath the notice of a poetess.

I have no reason to think that my person is particularly disagreeable; yet, I know not how it is, I am avoided by gentlemen who are ambitious of the company of other ladies. They have dropt, in the hearing of some of my friends, that though they think me extremely clever, yet they cannot reconcile the ideas of female attractions and the knowledge of the Greek. They do not mean to detract from my praise; but they must own, that I am not the woman after their hearts. They entertain a notion, that a lady of improved understanding will not submit to the less dignified cares of managing a household. She knows how to make verses, says some witty beau, but give me the woman who can make a pudding.

I must confess, I ever thought it the most valuable recommendation of a wife to be capable of becoming a conversable companion to her husband; nor did I ever conceive that the qualifications of a cook-maid, a laundress, or a house-keeper, were the most desirable accomplishments in a partner for life. A woman of improved understanding

and real ſenſe is more likely to ſubmit to her condition, whatever it may be, than the uneducated or the half-learned; and ſuch an one will always be willing to ſuperintend œconomy when it becomes her duty; and to take an active part in houſe-hold management, when the happineſs of him ſhe loves, and of herſelf, depends upon her perſonal interference.

The education of children in the earlier periods, particularly of daughters, naturally belongs to the mother. Her inclination to improve them, ſeconded by her ability to take the proper methods, muſt be attended with the moſt valuable effects. The world is acquainted with the happy conſequences of a Cornelia's parental care. But it ſeems probable, that little nouriſhment of mind can be imbibed from a mother, whoſe ideas hardly ever wandered beyond the limits either of a kitchen or a dreſſing-room. Neither is there ſufficient reaſon to conclude, that ſhe whoſe intellectual acquiſitions enable her to entertain her huſband, and to form the minds of her children, muſt be incapable or unwilling to ſuperintend the table, and give a perſonal attention to domeſtic œconomy.

That learning belongs not to the female character, and that the female mind is not capable of a degree of improvement equal to that of the other ſex, are narrow and unphiloſophical prejudices. The preſent times exhibit moſt honourable inſtances of female learning and genius. The ſuperior advantages of boys education are, perhaps, the ſole reaſon of their ſubſequent ſuperiority. Learning is equally attainable, and, I think, equally valuable, for the ſatisfaction ariſing from it, to a woman as a man. For my own part, I would not loſe the little I poſſeſs, to avoid all thoſe diſagreeable conſequences of which I have juſt now complained.

No. CXLIII. ON PARENTAL INDULGENCE.

THE love of progeny seems to operate as strongly in the brute creation as in the human species, during the helpless age of immaturity. The guidance of instinct, indeed, as it is more decisively determinate, seems to bring up an offspring with less deviation from the purposes of nature, than the superior faculty of reason. The greater acuteness of reason leads to hesitation, and involves in error, while it is distracted by the variety of objects it assembles for its choice. The bird never injures its young by repletion. The young, indeed, of few animals, when left to the care of the parent, without the interference of man, is found to perish. But it is well known how large a proportion of children die in the metropolis, under the age of two years. The cause is in general the neglect of nature for the aids of art, proceeding from a degree of fondness which stimulates the parent to take all the care upon herself, and to leave little to the visible process of natural energies.

If the child survive by the vigour of its constitution to a puerile age, even then the fondness of the parent, amiable in its origin, but the injurious to the object it most wishes to benefit, is found to destroy the very purposes of living, by endeavouring to render life pleasurable to excess, and without vicissitude. If his absence can be so far borne as to permit him to enter at a school, an earnest desire is expressed that he may be indulged in all those luxuries of the table which pollute the pure stream of the infant blood, and, by overloading the organs of intellect, preclude the possibility of solid improvement. He, whose attention should be engrossed by his book, and who should learn to look on every pleasure of the senses as a subordinate pleasure, is taught, by the overweening attachment of a parent, to have little other care than to pamper the grossest among the animal appetites.

Regularity of diet, and modest decency in all the circum-

ſtances of ſcholaſtic life, are often repreſented as the reſult of a too penurious œconomy; and the young pupil no ſooner returns, in the days of vacation, to his paternal roof, than he is crammed with delicacies, to compenſate the penance he has undergone at the place of his education.

We can derive but little improvement from the teacher we contemn. Yet how can the boy avoid contempt for the maſter, whom he is taught to conſider as totally regardleſs of any thing but his own ſordid intereſt, and capable of depriving the child committed to his care of his proper ſuſtenance? But they who are ſenſible in other reſpects, are rendered, by their fondneſs, weak enough to believe any calumny which a froward child utters for the ſake of changing his place of education, or of remaining at home.

The propenſity to indulgence is ſo ſtrong, that at the matureſt age, and with the moſt improved reaſon, it is difficult to reſtraint it within the limits of moderation. To encourage, inſtead of checking this natural tendency, is in effect, to nurſe thoſe vices of the future youth, and to cauſe thoſe exceſſes of early manhood, which in the end haſten the grey heirs of the inconſiderate parent with ſorrow to the grave. Few would be profligate in the extreme, if they were not untaught all the virtue they learn under their tutors, by the example and inadvertence of their own family. When immorality is obliquely recommended by a father's practice, the infection is irreſiſtible. A tutor's admonitions are ſoon ſuppoſed to proceed merely from official care, when they contradict the conduct of him whom a child naturally loves above all others.

The general cuſtom of allowing a conſiderable weekly ſtipend, and of giving pecuniary preſents to the ſchool-boy, often fruſtrates the intentions of education. It is not likely that he ſhould give his thoughts to literary improvement, who is obliged to ſtudy how he ſhall ſpend the bounty of his aunts and couſins; and whoſe pocket always enables him to find recreation without ſeeking it in books. It would be happy if things could be ſo contrived, that, for want of employment, he ſhould be driven to thoſe volumes where

employment of the ſweeteſt kind may be always found, attended with the moſt valuable advantages. A profuſion of money at a childiſh age is not uncommonly the cauſe of ſubſequent extravagance, and tends to introduce one of the moſt pernicious and leaſt curable vices, a propenſity to gaming. But reaſoning can avail little againſt the partiality of ſome fond relation, who cannot ſuffer preſent pleaſure to be neglected by her favourite, for the ſake of an advantage which is diſtant and uncertain.

It is uſually ſuppoſed that maternal affection is ſtronger than paternal. There is no doubt but that it often interpoſes, in adjuſting the plan of education. Its kind ſolicitude is too amiable to be cenſured with aſperity. Yet we muſt aſſert, that it is not poſſible that a mother, though ſenſible and accompliſhed, ſhould be ſo well qualified to direct the care of a boy's education in all its parts, as a father of equal abilities. All the important departments in civil life are filled by men. The pulpit, the bar, the ſenate-houſe, are appropriated to men. Men, from the facility with which they travel, and their ſuperior hardineſs, ſee more of the world than women, who, with the ſame opportunities, might indeed make the ſame obſervations; but who, in the preſent ſtate of things, cannot judge of thoſe qualifications, attainments, manners, and characters, which recommend to notice in all the profeſſions of life, and tend to inſure ſucceſs. Hence it is that they are obſerved to ſet the higheſt value on ornamental accompliſhments, of the grace of which their fine taſte is peculiarly ſenſible; and to under-rate the more ſolid attainments, with the utility and beauty of which their ſituation often keeps them unacquainted. Many a fond and ſenſible mother has controverted the neceſſity of learning Latin, as a *dead* language, in which there can be no uſe, while the living languages of France and Italy are more eaſily attainable, and infinitely more faſhionable. Such a judgment is not to be wondered at; nor does it proceed from natural weakneſs, but from an unavoidable unacquaintance with the charms of the claſſics, and the utility of Latin in the practice of every liberal art, in the converſation of the enlightened, and in the ſtudy of the moſt admired modern books, which abound in Latin quotations, in allu-

sions to the classics, and in words which cannot be fully understood without understanding the language from which they are derived.

Add to this, that the extreme tenderness of maternal affection will not permit that strict discipline to be exercised on a beloved son, which, though it has nothing in it of harsh severity, resembles not the soft and indulgent treatment of the mother or nurse. Scarcely any thing of value is brought to perfection without some care analogous to this scholastic discipline. The tree will not produce its fruits in sufficient abundance, or with a proper flavour, unless it is chastised in its luxuriances by the hand of art. It is requisite that the stubborn soil should be broken by cultivation. The most serviceable animals are either useless or hurtful, till reduced to obedience by coercion. Man, above all, possessed as he is of stronger powers and acuter perceptions, of ill qualities no less than good, in a superior degree, requires all the aids of art to correct his enormities, and teach him to act a rational and consistent part in the theatre of the world. Although the infliction of salutary discipline may give pain even to those who know it to be salutary, yet they must not, for the sake of sparing their own feelings, act in contradiction to their judgment, and do an irreparable injury to those whom they most tenderly love. Excessive lenity and indulgence are ultimately excessive rigour.

With the excellent effects of Spartan discipline, every one is acquainted. Of the lamentable consequences of modern relaxation, daily experience furnishes examples. The puerile age is patient and tractible. Reformation must begin there. Temperance, diligence, modesty, and humility, cannot be too early inculcated. These will lead through the temple of virtue to the temple of honour and happiness. In this progress, strict discipline will sometimes be necessary; but let not the pretence of proper correction give an opportunity for the gratification of vindictive cruelty. Inhumanity, even in a Busby, admits not of palliation.

No. CXLIV. ON THE POEMS ATTRIBUTED TO ROWLEY.

THERE are many truths which we firmly believe, though we are unable to refute every argument which the extreme subtilty of refined learning may advance to invalidate them. When I read the researches of those learned antiquaries who have endeavoured to prove, that the poems attributed to Rowley were really written by him, I observe many ingenious remarks in confirmation of their opinion, which it would be tedious, if not difficult, to controvert. But I no sooner turn to the poems, than the labour of the antiquaries appears only a waste of time and ingenuity, and I am involuntarily forced to join in placing that laurel, which he seems so well to have deserved, on the brow of Chatterton.

The poems bear so many marks of superior genius, that they have deservedly excited the general attention of polite scholars, and are considered as the most remarkable productions in modern poetry. We have many instances of poetical eminence at an early age; but neither Cowley, Milton, nor Pope, ever produced any thing while they were boys, which can justly be compared to the poems of Chatterton. The learned antiquaries do not indeed dispute their excellence. They extol in the highest terms of applause. They raise their favourite Rowley to a rivalry with Homer; but they make the very merit of the works an argument against the real author. Is it possible, say they, that a boy could produce composition so beautiful and so masterly? That a common boy should produce them is not possible; but that they should be produced by a boy of an extraordinary genius, such a genius as was that of Homer and Spakespeare; such a genius as appears not above once in many centuries though a prodigy, is such an one as by no means exceeds the bounds of rational credibility.

That Chatterton was such a genius, his manners and his life in some degree evince. He had all the tremulous sensibility of genius, all its eccentricities, all its pride, and all

its spirit. Even his death, unfortunate and wicked as it was, displayed a haughtiness of soul, which urged him to spurn a world, where even his exalted genius could not vindicate him from contempt, indigence, and contumely.

Against the opinion of his superiority of genius, the miscellanies which he published in a periodical pamphlet, are triumphantly produced. But what proof is there, that all which are attributed to him are really his own? They are collected after his death; collected, I suppose, by conjecture and published in a separate volume, with all the typographical errata of the hasty pamphlets from which they are reprinted. But in many of the pieces which were confessedly written by him, there are marks of genius not indeed equal to those of the counterfeit Rowley, but such as prove, that the boy who wrote them could write better. In composing the ancient poems all his attention had been exerted. It was the first, and seems to have been the greatest, object of his life, to raise himself to future eminence by the instrumentality of a fictitious poet of a former age. Nights, if not days, were devoted to the work; for we have it on record, that he used to sit awake in his chamber during the silence of midnight. But the little compositions which he wrote for the magazines were either written in a careless mood, when he relaxed his mind from his grand work, or in a moment of distress, when an extemporary essay, or copy of verses, was necessary to procure him a halfpenny roll and a draught of small beer. When he found that the editors were more desirous of quantity than quality, and, amidst the numerous volunteers in their service, seemed backward to engage with one who wanted a stipend, he foresaw that even the little which nature wanted would not be supplied—He saw and resigned his indignant spirit.

Unfortunate boy! short and evil were thy days, but thy fame shall be immortal. Hadst thou been known to the munificent patrons of genius—

Unfortunate boy! poorly wast thou accommodated during thy short sojourning among us;—rudely wast thou treated,—sorely did thy feeling soul suffer from the scorn of the unworthy; and there are, at last, those who wish to

rob thee of thy only meed, thy posthumous glory. Severe too are the censurers of thy morals. In the gloomy moments of despondency, I fear thou hast uttered impious and blasphemous thoughts, which none can defend, and which neither thy youth, nor thy fiery spirit, nor thy situation, can excuse. But let thy more rigid censors reflect, that thou wast literally and strictly but a boy. Let many of thy bitterest enemies reflect what were their own religious principles, and whether they had any, at the age of fourteen, fifteen, and sixteen. Surely it is a severe and an unjust surmise, that thou wouldst probably have ended thy life as a victim of the laws, if thou hadst not finished it as thou didst; since the very act by which thou durst put an end to thy painful existence, proves that thou thoughtest it better to die, than to support life by theft or violence.

The speculative errors of a boy who wrote from the sudden suggestions of passion or despondency, who is not convicted of any immoral or dishonest act in consequence of his speculations, ought to be consigned to oblivion. But there seems to be a general and inveterate dislike to the boy, exclusively of the poet; a dislike which many will be ready to impute, and, indeed, not without the appearance of reason, to that insolence and envy of the little great, which cannot bear to acknowledge so transcendent and commanding a superiority in the humble child of want and obscurity.

Malice, if there was any, may surely now be at rest; for "Cold he lies in the grave below." But where were ye, O ye friends to genius, when, stung with disappointment, distressed for food and raiment, with every frightful form of human misery painted on his fine imagination, poor Chatterton sunk in despair? Alas! ye knew him not then, and now it is too late,——

For now he is dead;
Gone to his death-bed,
All under the willow tree.

So sang the sweet youth, in as tender an elegy as ever flowed from a feeling heart.

In return for the pleasure I have received from thy poems, I pay thee, poor boy, the trifling tribute of my praise. Thyself thou hast emblazoned; thine own monument thou

had erected. But they whom thou haſt delighted, feel a pleaſure in vindicating thine honours from the rude attacks of detraction. Thy ſentiments, thy verſe, thy rythm, all are modern, all are thine. By the help of gloſſaries and dictionaries, and the peruſal of many old Engliſh writers, thou haſt been able to tranſlate the language of the preſent time into that of former centuries. Thou haſt built an artificial ruin. The ſtones are moſſy and old, the whole fabric appears really antique to the diſtant and the careleſs ſpectator; even the connoiſſeur, who pores with ſpectacles on the ſingle ſtones, and inſpects the moſſy concretions with an antiquarian eye, boldly authenticates its antiquity; but they who examine without prejudice, and by the criterion of common ſenſe, clearly diſcover the cement and the workmanſhip of a modern maſon.

But though I cannot entertain a doubt but that the poems were written by Chatterton, yet I mean not to dictate to others, nor will I engage in controverſy. I have expreſſed my feelings as thoſe of a reader, who, though he reſpects the ſtudy of antiquities, diſlikes the blind prejudices of the mere antiquary. I leave the weapons of controverſy to be wielded by thoſe powerful champions in the cauſe of Chatterton, a Tyrwhitt and a Warton. I give a ſingle vote for Chatterton; but I can make no intereſt in his favour.

No. CXLV. ON THE MORAL TENDENCY OF THE WRITINGS OF STERNE.

IT is the privilege of genius, like the ſun, to gild every object on which it emits its luſtre. If the influence of its light and heat be directed on deformity itſelf, ſomething of an agreeable tinge is communicated; and that which naturally excites horror and averſion, begins at laſt to pleaſe. Genius, like the fabulous power of a Midas, ſeems to convert all it touches into gold, and, with the wonderful property of the philoſophers ſtone, to tranſmute the baſeſt to the pureſt metal. Hence it has happened, that

doctrines which common ſenſe and common prudence have repudiated, are no ſooner recommended by writers of genius, than they are received without debate, and admired as the ultimate diſcoveries of improved philoſophy. Let the ſame opinions be advanced by a dull writer, and even the vain and the vicious, whom they tend to encourage, will refute and diſavow them, from principles of pride and of ſhame.

That Sterne poſſeſſed a fine particle of real genius, if our reaſon were diſpoſed to deny it, our ſenſations on peruſing him will fully evince. It is, I think, an infallible proof of real genius, when a writer poſſeſſes the power of ſhaking the nerves, or of affecting the mind in the moſt lively manner in a few words, and with the moſt perfect ſimplicity of language. Such a power conſpicuouſly marks both a Shakeſpeare and a Sterne; though Sterne is far below Shakeſpeare in the ſcale of genius.

I am ready to allow to Sterne another and a moſt exalted merit, beſides and above the praiſe of genius. There never was a heathen philoſopher, of any age or nation, who has recommended in ſo affecting a manner, the benignant doctrines of a general philanthropy. He has corrected the acrimony of the heart, ſmoothed the aſperities of natural temper, and taught the milk of human kindneſs to flow all-cheerily (it is his own expreſſion) in gentle and uninterrupted channels.

To have effected ſo amiable a purpoſe is a great praiſe, a diſtinguiſhed honour. I lament that the praiſe is leſſened and the honour ſullied by many faults and many follies, which render the writings of Sterne juſtly and greatly reprehenſible.

If we conſider them as compoſitions, and are guided in our judgment by the dictates of ſound criticiſm, and by thoſe ſtandards of excellence, the rectitude of which has been decided by the teſtimony of the politeſt ages, it will be neceſſary to pronounce on them a ſevere ſentence. The great critic of antiquity required, as the neceſſary conſtituents of a legitimate compoſition, a beginning, a middle, and an end. I believe it will be difficult to find them in the chaotic confuſion of Triſtram Shandy. But, diſ-

regarding the tribunal of Ariſtotle, to which the modern pretenders to genius do not conſider themſelves as amenable, it will ſtill be true, even by the deciſions of reaſon and common ſenſe, that his writings abound with faults.

Obſcurity has always been deemed one of the greateſt errors of which a writer can be guilty; and there have been few readers, except thoſe who thought that the acknowledgment would derogate from their reputation for wiſdom, who have not complained that Triſtram Shandy is in many places diſguſtfully obſcure.

The admirers of Sterne extol his wit. But I believe it will be found that his wit is of the loweſt kind, and the eaſieſt of invention; for is it not for the moſt part alluſive obſcenity? a ſpecies of wit to be found in its fulleſt perfection in the vulgareſt and vileſt haunts of vice? It is, indeed, eaſy to attract the notice and the admiration of the youthful and the wanton, by exhibiting looſe images under a tranſparent veil. It is true indeed there is uſually a veil, and the decent are therefore tempted to read; but the veil, like the affected modeſty of a courtezan, ſerves only as an artifice to facilitate corruption.

The praiſe of humour has been laviſhed on him with peculiar bounty. If quaintneſs is humour, the praiſe is all his own, and let Cervantes and Fielding bow their heads to Sterne. They who admire Uncle Toby, Doctor Slop, and Corporal Trim, as natural characters, or as exhibiting true humour in their manners and converſations, are little acquainted with naure, and have no juſt taſte for genuine humour. It is evident enough that the author meant to be humorous and witty, and many of his readers, in the abundance of their good-nature, have taken the will for the deed.

But till obſcurity, till, obſcenity, till quaintneſs, till impudence, till oddity, and mere wantonneſs, wildneſs, and extravagance, are perfections in writing, Triſtram Shandy cannot juſtly claim the rank to which it has been raiſed by folly and faſhion, by caprice, libertiniſm, and ignorance. I know that this cenſure will be conſidered as blaſphemy by the idolators of Sterne; but I hope it will not ſour that milk of human kindneſs which they may have imbibed from his writings; and to an exceſſive degree of

which many soft and and effeminate persons affectedly pretend. Let their philanthropy repress awhile their resentment, and I will venture to predict, that time will insensibly strip the writer of those honours which never belonged to him.

But will you allow his sermons no merit? I allow some of them the merit of the pathetic; but the laborious attempts to be witty and humorous have spoiled the greater part of them. The appearance of sincerity is one of the best beauties of a sermon. But Sterne seems as if he were laughing at his audience, as if he had ascended the pulpit in a frolic, and preached in mockery. Had he however written nothing but his sermons, he certainly would not have been censured as the destroyer of the morals and the happiness of private life.

There are, indeed, exquisite touches of the pathetic interspersed throughout all his works. His pathetic stories are greatly admired. The pathetic was the chief excellence of his writings; his admirers will be displeased if one were to add, that it is the only one which admits of unalloyed applause. It is certainly this which chiefly adorns the Sentimental Journey: a work which, whatever are its merits, has had a pernicious influence on the virtue, and consequently on the happiness, of public and private society.

That softness, that affected and excessive sympathy at first sight, that sentimental affection, which is but *lust in disguise*, and which is so strongly inspired by the Sentimental Journey and by Tristram Shandy, have been the ruin of thousands of our countrymen and country-women, who fancied, that while they were breaking the laws of God and man, they were actuated by the fine feelings of *sentimental affection*. How much are divorces multiplied since Sterne appeared!

Sterne himself, with all his pretensions, is said to have displayed in private life, a bad and a hard heart; and I shall not hesitate to pronounce him, though many admire him as the first of philosopers, the grand promoter of adultry, and every species of illicit commerce.

No. CXLVI. ON THE WEIGHT AND EFFICACY WHICH MORALITY MAY DERIVE FROM THE INFLUENCE AND EXAMPLE OF THOSE WHO ARE CALLED THE GREAT.

IT is true, indeed, that the world abounds with moral inſtruction, and that there is ſcarcely any good thing ſo eaſily obtained as good advice; but it is no leſs true, that moral inſtruction and good advice are found to poſſeſs a very ſmall degree of influence in the buſy walks of active life. In the church, we hear the ſcriptures read and ſermons preached; in the library, we ſtudy and admire the morality of the philoſophers; but how few, in the actual purſuits of ambition, of intereſt, of pleaſure, and even in the common occupations and intercourſe of ordinary life, ſuffer their conduct to be regulated by the precept of a Solomon, of a Socrates, or of Him who was greater than either!

No ſentence is triter, than that example is more powerful than precept: but when the example is ſet by the rich and the great, its influence on the herd of mankind becomes irreſiſtible. What can books effect? what avail the gentle admonitions of the retired moraliſt, againſt the examples of lords, dukes, and Eaſt India nabobs? Can the ſtill ſmall voice of conſcience be heard by thoſe who live in the noiſe and tumult of pleaſurable purſuits; or can the mild doctrines of the humble Jeſus be attended to, amid the agitations of the gaming-table, and the debaucheries of a brothel? A vicious nobleman, or profligate man of faſhion, contributes more to extirpate morality, and diminiſh the little portion of happineſs which is allowed to mankind, than all the malignant writings of the ſceptics, from Mandeville and Bolingbroke, down to the feeble, yet conceited writer, who inſinuates his corrupt and infidel opinions under the fair ſemblance of an elegant hiſtory. I cannot help obſerving, when I think of this laſt and recent attempt, that it reſembles that of the evil ſpirit, who when he beguiled the mother of mankind, and ruined all her progeny, uſed the ſoft words

of an affected eloquence. The ſerpent was however curſed; but the wily hiſtorian is invited to a court, rewarded with places of honour and advantage, and eagerly enrolled in the legiſlative body of a mighty and a chriſtian nation.

It is certainly true, that when a government beſtows peculiar honour on men who have written againſt the religion of their country, and who have impiouſly fought againſt the King of kings, it muſt loſe the reſpect and attachment of all good men. The religion of a country is unqueſtionably worthy of more ſolicitude in its preſervation than the political conſtitution, however excellent and admirable. Kings, with all their minions, and prerogatives, lawgivers and laws, are trifles compared to that ſyſtem of religion, on which depends the temporal and eternal welfare of every individual throughout the empire. What avails it, that under a ſucceſsful adminiſtration the French are beaten, and the Americans ſcourged for the ſin of rebellion, if the ſame adminiſtration ruins our beſt, our ſweeteſt hopes; thoſe which rely on the protection of a kind Providence, and thoſe which cheer us in this vale of miſery by the bright gleams of a ſun which ſhall riſe to ſet no more?

But ſuppoſing the narrow minded miniſters of a government ſo involved in gaming, ſenſuality, and temporal concerns, as to view all religion as impoſture, and all modes of faith as political contrivances; yet ſurely they act inconſiſtently with the dictates of their own mean and low ſpecies of wiſdom, when they extirpate, by their example, that religion which they allow to be politically uſeful. What muſt the common people think when profligate men are advanced to the head of a profeſſion? They cannot but believe, that thoſe who are reputed to be ſo much wiſer than themſelves, and who are evidently greater, in a worldly ſenſe of the epithet, muſt have choſen that ſyſtem of opinions, and that plan of conduct, which are moſt likely to be juſt and rational, ſafe and pleaſant. "If my lord, or his grace." ſays the mechanic, "of whoſe wiſdom liſtening ſenates ſtand in awe, is a "debauchee and an infidel, I muſt conclude that my pariſh "preacher, an obſcure and homely man, is a hypocrite, re- "ligion a farce, morality a uſeleſs reſtraint on the liberty of "nature. Welcome, then, univerſal libertiniſm! and let

" us haſten to the houſe of the harlot; let us drink the ſweet " cup of intoxication; let us ſcorn the creeping manners of " vulgar induſtry, and, like men of ſpirit, ſeek our fortunes " with a piſtol on the highway."

We will ſuppoſe the caſe of a great officer of ſtate, but of an abandoned character, reſiding at a great houſe in a populous ſtreet of the metropolis. His conſpicuous ſtation draws the eyes of all the neighbours on every part of his private as well as his public conduct. His neighbours, we will proceed to ſuppoſe are honeſt men, bred, in what he calls the prejudices, but which they really believed the virtues, of their forefathers. They are faithful huſbands, they are conſtant churchmen. They are temperate and œconomical. They are induſtrious in their occupations, and juſt in the payment of their debts. But the great man produces in them a total metamorphoſis. He lives in a ſtate of faſhionable ſeparation from his wife, whom he treated cruelly and wickedly. He keeps a miſtreſs. His houſe is a conſtant ſcene of intemperate feſtivity. His Sundays are, in a peculiar manner, devoted to jollity, gaming, and debauchery. He would as ſoon think of going to heaven as to church; and as to paying debts, it is quite unfaſhionable, and he has genteeler methods of expending his money than on the low tradeſmen who ſupply him with nothing elſe but neceſſaries. Who, that has any pretenſions to faſhion, could bear to neglect a horſe-race and the gaming-table, merely to ſatisfy the greaſy inhabitants of Clare-market? Such is ſometimes the example of the great neighbour.

Now I aſk, whether the reſtraints of a common education or of common principles, whether the maxims of books or the admonitions of preachers, can counterbalance the weight of ſuch an example, rendered brilliant by riches and grandeur, and ſtill farther recommeneded by the patronage of a king, and the authority of office? Vice and miſery are communicated from him, firſt to his neighbourhood, and then to the public at large, like infectious and fatal diſeaſes from the foul contagion of a putrid carcaſe.

But if a king, a court, a miniſtry, a parliament, were to honour and reward thoſe only, or chiefly, whoſe characters were unimpeached, and to brand with infamy, or at leaſt to

neglect, the abandoned libertine and the audacious blasphemer, however celebrated for eloquence and abilities, then would the empire be fixed on a basis of adamant; then would faction and rebellion be no more; and the rulers of this world would deserve to be honoured with a title to which they have usually but little claim, that of the representatives of the Beneficent and Almighty Lord of all Creation.

No. CXLVII. ON THE PROFLIGACY AND CONSEQUENT MISERY OF THE LOWER CLASSES, AND ON THE MEANS OF PREVENTION.

A Contemplative and benevolent man can scarcely look down for a moment on the lower walks of life without feeling his compassion powerfully excited. On whatever side he turns, he beholds human nature sadly degraded, and sinking into the most deplorable wretchedness, in proportion as it recedes from its natural and its attainable perfection. Ye philosophers, who exert your ingenuity to explode, as unnecessary, the little virtue and religion that remain among us leave, your closets awhile, and survey mankind as they are found in the purlieus of a great metropolis, in the haunts of old Drury, of St. Giles's, of Duke's Place, of Hockley in the Hole, of the brothel, of the prison-house; and then say, whether your hearts do not smite you on the recollection, that you have exercised those talents which God Almighty gave you for benignant purposes, in breaking down the fences of morality! Let him who coolly controverts the distinction between moral good and evil, and who, instigated by vice and vanity boldly fights against the religion of Jesus, and the comfortable doctrines of grace and redemption, repair to the cells of the convict, to the condemned hole, and spend the midnight hour with the murderer who is doomed to fall a victim on the morrow to the justice of his country. Ah! little think the conceited sophists who sit calmly at their desks, and teach men to laugh at all that is serious and sacred, to what an abyss of misery

the actual practice of their speculative opinions will reduce the poor lost child of fallen Adam! If they thought on this, and possessed hearts capable of feeling, they would shudder at the tendency of their writings, and henceforth employ their abilities in restoring human nature to happiness and dignity.

The evils arising from the poverty of the lower ranks are trifling, when compared with those occasioned by their depravity. There is, indeed, no real and substantial happiness, of which poverty, when accompanied with health and innocence, is not capable; but wallowing in vice, involved in the perplexities of fraud, haunted by the fears of detection, and distressed and tormented with the diseases of intemperance, it becomes such a state of wretchedness and wickedness as can only be exceeded in the regions of infernal torture. And can the rulers of this world possess a plenitude of power without attempting to exert it in its fullest force in the prevention, or at least the mitigation, of extreme misery among the lowest, the most numerous, and perhaps the most useful members of the community? I have no esteem for that species of politics which pretends to pursue a national good independently of the happiness of individuals; and I cannot help thinking a system of government which derives any part of its wealth from the wretchedness of the greater part of its subjects, not only defective but diabolical. To encourage intoxication for the sake of increasing a revenue, though it may be natural in a confederacy of sharpers, is an idea so mean, so base, so cruel, that the statesman who entertains it, however loaded with civil honours, and renowned for his wisdom, deserves to be stigmatized with immortal infamy. That the vices and miseries of the lower classes chiefly arise from the multiplication of houses of public entertainment, is a truth which none have ever controverted. And perhaps no effectual and permanent remedy can be applied, without the interposition of the legislature in, lessening the number of public houses, and in exacting a strict scrutiny into the characters of those to whom licences are allowed.

But in the present constitution of affairs, it is greatly to be feared, that the desire of raising a large revenue will

usually supersede all moral considerations. What, indeed, is the moralist to the financier? The greatness of empire, like that of private life, is for the most part estimated by riches, exclusively of private virtue and of intellectual excellence. If then we vainly appeal to the legislature, we must seek in other resources for the alleviation of a disease which perhaps the legislature alone can radically cure.

Now it is certain, that much of the profligacy of the plebeian order arises from extreme ignorance. All men pursue with ardour the possession of some good, real or imaginary. What is it which must constitute this *good*, and appear superior to all other objects, in the mind of a wretch born in a cellar or a garret of Kent-street, or Broad St. Giles's almost starved with cold and hunger during his infancy, beaten, reviled, abused, neglected while a boy, and conducted to manhood amidst the most shocking examples of cruelty and fraud, of drunkenness and debauchery? Is it probable that, for the most part, he should have an idea of any other good but the possession of money, and the indulgence of the grossest sensuality? Can he have any principles or habits of virtue to restrain him from secret fraud and open violence? His understanding is no less rude and uncultivated than that of the savage, and becomes at last incapable of admitting any instruction but in the low tricks of a thief, and the artifices of a prostitute. The world exists not to him, but as it appears amidst the vilest, the most degenerate, and the most ignorant of the human race. He pursues a *summum bonum*, or a chief good, which appears to him to consist in seizing the property of the incautious, and in using his gains as the instrument of indulgence in brutal excess. Poor unfortunate brother! for a brother we must acknowledge thee, deformed as thou art with rags, and loathsome to the eye of delicacy—Hapless boy! if thou hadst known purer pleasures and better objects, thou wouldst probably have sought them with the same eagerness which has brought thee to the gibbet. The dignified statesman, the venerable bishop, the authoritative judge who tries and who condemns thee to die, might probably have done as thou hast done, and suffered as thou sufferest, had he been born as thou wast born, the child of misery, the

outcaſt of ſociety; friendleſs, homeleſs, unbeloved, unregarded, unknown, and unknowing of the means and motives of an honeſt induſtry. Thou falleſt a victim to the laws indeed, and perhaps a juſt victim; but I will pity thee, my heart ſhall bleed for thee, and venture ſtill to predict, that the ſweet mercy of Heaven will mitigate the ſeverity of human juſtice.

He who can enjoy the pleaſures of affluence without conſidering the miſery of the lower claſſes, and endeavouring, according to his influence and abilities, to alleviate the burthen, probably poſſeſſes a diſpoſition which no riches can render happy. Charity is characteriſtic of this country, and is, indeed, the natural effect of Britiſh generoſity. Our clergy are conſtantly recommending it in the metropolis; and the many palaces of the poor which lift up their roofs around it, are eminent and honourable teſtimonies, that their preaching is not in vain when they recommend munificence. There are, however, few charitable eſtabliſhments that ſo immediately tend to ſnatch the loweſt claſſes from wretchedneſs and ruin as that of the Marine Society; and if my praiſe could contribute to effect it, the fame of its inſtitutors ſhould be immortal. But their own benevolent hearts, and that God, in whoſe gracious purpoſes they co-operate, are able to beſtow on them a reward infinitely ſuperior to all human glory.

They who inform the underſtandings of the poor, in ſuch a manner and degree as to amend their morals, contribute more to their happineſs than the moſt munificent among their pecuniary benefactors. In a great and commercial nation honeſt induſtry will ſeldom be deſtitute of employment and reward. And here I cannot help remarking the ſingular utility and importance of the clergy. The church doors are open to all; and valuable inſtruction in every duty of human life is afforded gratuitouſly. Our Saviour, who knew and felt for the wretchedneſs of the lower claſſes, ſeems to have deſigned the goſpel, in a peculiar manner, for the poor; and the poor of this country have the goſpel preached to them, if they are willing to liſten to it, in every part of the kingdom. But it is a melancholy truth, that the poor in general, but eſpecially thoſe of the

metropolis, neglect to avail themselves of this singular and unspeakable advan age. Those among them who give any attention to religion, are often led to a state approaching to lunacy, by illiterate and fanatical pretenders to heavenly illumination.

I venture to affirm then, that more weight and authority should be given to the regular clergy, whether dissenters or on the establishment. I mean not to erect a spiritual tyranny, for I abhor all tyranny; but I wish that some mode should be devised for rendering the regular clergy more respectable than they now are in the eyes of the vulgar. And I should imagine the most effectual method of accomplishing this purpose is to reward those who are eminently distinguished for piety and for their parochial labours, with those preferments, and with those honours, which, in the eye of reason and of God, are justly their due. In the present state of things, the worthy curate, who spends all his days in preaching, praying, and in visiting the sick, shall earn less, and be less respected, than a smith and a carpenter; and at his death leave his widow and his children to the cold protection of charity. But a young rake, who happens to be cousin to a lord or a bishop, or to be connected with those who have influence at an election, shall get himself *blacked over* or *japanned*, as he vulgarly phrases it, at an ordination, and thenceforward be preferred to pluralities, and shine, as a sensible author observes, in all public places but his own pulpits.

But, after all that the clergy can do, even when abuses are removed, it is to be feared that the lower classes will be led by the examples of the higher. But oh! ye who call yourselves the great, condescend once in your lives to visit a gaol, and to survey the mansions of woe and wickedness in the out-skirts of the town! I apply not to your purses; you are liberal in subscribing to all kinds of charitable institutions. Ye do well. But give me leave to tell you, that the setting of a good example to the lower classes, considered merely as an act of charity, will do more good, and prevent more misery, than if ye cut down your last oak, or give all ye win at the gaming-table, to found an hospital or establish a dispensary.

No. CXLVIII. ON SOME PASSAGES IN ARISTOTLE'S RHETORIC, WITH MISCELLANEOUS REMARKS ON HIS STYLE, GENIUS, AND WORKS.

ARISTOTLE eſtabliſhed an intellectual empire, more glorious and univerſal than the conqueſts of his pupil. But he is a remarkable inſtance of the caprice of human judgment and the revolutions of taſte. After having been idolized with a veneration almoſt blaſphemous, he is now moſt undeſervedly neglected. And yet his works, tho' unentertaining and obſcure to the reader who peruſes them with the ſame attention which he gives to a novel and a newſpaper, abound with matter which cannot fail to enrich the mind, and to delight a philoſophical taſte by its beautiful truth and accuracy. In his three books on the rhetorical art, are many paſſages, which deſcribe human nature in the moſt curious manner, and with the greateſt fidelity of delineation. He characterizes the manners of different ages, no leſs ſcientifically than a Hunter would deſcribe an anatomical ſubject, or a Linnæus a plant. The fine pictures of the manners of young and old men in the ſecond book, are ſuch as Horace has imitated, but not equalled; ſuch as might have richly fertilized the imagination of a Shakeſpeare. The celebrated ſpeech of Jaques, is not equal to the accurate and complete deſcriptions of the manners of different ages in the life of man by the neglected Ariſtotle.

The cloſe, yet comprehenſive language of Ariſtotle, will ſcarcely admit of a literal tranſlation. I ſhall not then attempt to deliver his ſentiments in Engliſh, ſince I ſhould not ſatisfy myſelf; but I will refer the young ſtudent to the admirable original, where, in the fourteenth, and a few ſubſequent chapters of the ſecond book, he will be able to acquire a very accurate knowledge of human nature.

I have ſelected theſe paſſages as a ſpecimen of Ariſtotle, with an intention to obviate the prepoſſeſſions of thoſe who imagine that every part of his works is abſtruſe and difficult

of comprehenſion. A good tranſlation would be the beſt commentary that could be given of them: but he who was the beſt qualified to perform it in perfection is now no more. It is, indeed, much to be lamented, that the great philoſopher of Saliſbury did not condeſcend to enrich his country with a tranſlation of the beſt among the works of his admired Stagyrite. Mr. Harris's ſtyle is, indeed, for the moſt part, the ſtyle of Plato; but we may conclude from the many paſſages from Ariſtotle, which he has moſt accurately tranſlated in his notes, that he would have rendered whole treatiſes in Engliſh to the greateſt advantage. He has, however, cauſed the want of a tranſlation of Ariſtotle to be leſs felt, by ſupplying ſuch originals himſelf as certainly vie with his Grecian maſter.

I cannot help remarking, that though this is an age in which many ingenious authors delight in metaphyſical reſearches, yet few attend to the writings of Ariſtotle. Indeed, many of the modern philoſophers, who have done all they can to obſcure the light of nature, common ſenſe, and revelation, by the clouds of metaphyſics, have not been ſufficiently acquainted with Greek, or with ancient learning, to be able to improve themſelves by the fine philoſophy of the poliſhed ages of Greece and Rome. Like ſpiders in a dark and dirty corner, they have drawn ſlimſy cobwebs from themſelves, with which they cruelly endeavour to enſnare the giddy and unwary.

It is indeed my misfortune, if it be a misfortune, to have no great idea of the utility of metaphyſical diſquiſition. And though Ariſtotle's logic and metaphyſics principally contributed, in the middle ages, to render him the idol of the world, I cannot help conſidering them as the leaſt uſeful parts of his various lucubrations. They are indeed valuable curioſities, and illuſtrious monuments of human ingenuity; but at the ſame time, when compared to his rhetorical, ethical, and political books, they are as the huſk and the ſhell to the pulp and the kernel. It was theſe, however, together with his erroneous phyſics, which induced the bigoted theologiſts to number Ariſtotle among the ſaints in the calendar, and to publiſh a hiſtory of his life and death; which concluded with aſſerting, that Ariſtotle

was the forerunner of Chriſt in philoſophy, as John the Baptiſt had been in grace. Images of him and of the founder of chriſtianity were beheld at one time with equal veneration. It is ſaid, that ſome ſects taught their diſciples the categories inſtead of the catechiſm, and read in the church a ſection of the ethics inſtead of a chapter in the Goſpel.

If the exclamation which he is related to have made at his death be true, he appears to have poſſeſſed very rational ideas on the ſubject of religion.

A chriſtian might have ſaid, as it is reported he ſaid, juſt before his diſſolution, "In ſin and ſhame was I born, in "ſorrow have I lived, in trouble I depart; O! thou Cauſe "of cauſes, have mercy upon me!"—I found this anecdote of Ariſtotle in the Centuries of Camerarius, but I am not certain of its authenticity.

The ſtyle of Ariſtotle has been cenſured as harſh and inelegant; but it muſt be remembered, that few works, of which ſo much remains, are ſuppoſed to have ſuffered more from the careleſſneſs or preſumption of tranſcribers, and the injuries of long duration, than the works of the great legiſlator of taſte and philoſophy. We may fairly attribute any chaſms and roughneſſes in the ſtyle to ſome rude hand, or to accident. Strabo indeed relates, that the works of Ariſtotle were greatly injured by damps, as they were buried in the earth a long time after the death of their writer. When they were brought to Rome, and tranſcribed, they were again injured by the hand of ignorance. It is not credible that ſo accurate a writer ſhould have neglected thoſe graces of ſtyle which the nature of his ſubjects admitted. The ſtyle of his beſt works is truly pure and Attic; and Quintilian, whoſe judgment ought to decide, expreſſes a doubt whether he ſhould pronounce him more illuſtrious for his knowledge, his copiouſneſs, his acumen, his variety, or the ſweetneſs of his ſtyle.

No. CXLIX. ON THE BEAUTY AND HAPPINESS OF AN OPEN BEHAVIOUR AND AN INGENUOUS DISPOSITION.

A Great part of mankind, if they cannot furnish themselves with the courage and generosity of the lion, think themselves equally happy, and much wiser, with the pitiful cunning of the fox. Every word they speak, however trivial the subject, is weighed before it is uttered. A disgustful silence is observed till somebody of authority has advanced an opinion, and then, with a civil leer, a doubtful and hesitating assent is given, such as may not preclude the opportunity of a subsequent retraction. If the conversation turn only on the common topics of the weather, the news, the play, the opera, they are no less reserved in uttering their opinion, than if their lives and fortunes depended on the sentiment they should at last venture to advance, with oracular dignity. Whatever may be their real idea on the subject, as truth is a trifle compared to the object of pleasing those with whom they converse, they generally contrive gently to agree with you; unless it should appear to them, on mature consideration, that their opinion (if contingencies to the number of at least ten thousand should take place) may, at the distance of half a century, involve them in some small danger of giving a little offence, or of incurring a small embarrassment. They wear a constant smile on their countenance, and are all goodness and benevolence, if you will believe their professions: but beware; for their hearts are as dark as the abysses which constitute the abodes of the evil spirit. A man of this character *niger est*, as Horace says, and thou, who justly claimest the title of an honest Englishman, be upon thy guard when thine ill fortune introduces thee into his company.

These crafty animals are even more reserved, cautious, timid, and serpentine, in action than in conversation. They lay the deepest schemes, and no conclave of cardinals, no combination of conspirators, no confederacy of thieves, ever deliberated with more impenetrable secrecy. Connections

are ſought with the moſt painful ſolicitude. No arts and no aſſiduities are neglected to obtain the favour of the great. Their hearts pant with the utmoſt anxiety to be introduced to a family of diſtinction and opulence, not only becauſe the connection gratifies their pride, but alſo becauſe, in the wonderful complications and viciſſitudes of human affairs, it may one day promote their intereſt. Alas! before that day arrives, their perpetual uneaſineſs has often put a period to their ambition, by terminating their exiſtence. But even if they gain their ends, after a youth and a manhood conſumed in conſtant care and ſervitude, yet the pleaſure is not adequate to the pain, nor the advantage to the labour. Every one is ready to complain of the ſhortneſs of life; to ſpend, therefore, the greateſt part of it in perpetual fear, caution, ſuſpence, and ſolicitude, merely to accompliſh an object of worldly ambition or avarice; what is it but the proverbial folly of him who loſes a pound to ſave a penny? Give me, O ye powers! an ingenuous man would exclaim, give me health and liberty, with a competence, and I will compaſſionate the man of a timid and ſervile ſoul, who has at laſt crept on hands and knees, through thick and thin, into a ſtall, and ſeated his limbs, after they have been palſied with care, on the bench of judges or of biſhops.

Indeed, the perpetual agitation of ſpirits, the tormenting fears, and the ardent hopes, which alternately diſorder the boſom of the ſubtle and ſuſpicious worldling, are more than a counterbalance to all the riches and titular honours which ſucceſsful cunning can obtain. What avail croziers, coronets, fortunes, manſion-houſes, parks, and equipages, when the poor poſſeſſor of them has worn out his ſenſibility, ruined his nerves, loſt his eyes, and perhaps ſtained his honour, and wounded his conſcience in the toilſome drudgery of the moſt abject ſervitude, from his youth up even to the hoary age of feebleneſs and decrepitude? When a man has a numerous offspring, it may, indeed, be generous to ſacrifice his own eaſe and happineſs to their advancement. He may feel a virtuous pleaſure in his conduct, which may ſooth him under every circumſtance of diſagreeable toil or painful ſubmiſſion. But it is obvious to obſerve, that the moſt artful of men, and the greateſt ſlaves to intereſt and

ambition, are frequently unmarried men; and that they were unmarried, becauſe their caution and timidity would never permit them to take a ſtep which could never be revoked: themſelves, however unamiable, have been the only objects of their love; and the reſt of mankind have been made uſe of merely as the inſtruments of their mean purpoſes and ſelfiſh gratifications. But the reſt of mankind need not envy them, for they inflict on themſelves the puniſhments they deſerve. They are always craving and never ſatisfied; they ſuffer a torment which is juſtly repreſented as infernal; that of being perpetually reaching after bleſſings which they can never graſp, of being prohibited to taſte the fruit, whoſe colour appears ſo charming to the eye, and whoſe flavour ſo delicious to the imagination.

How lovely and how happy, on the other hand, an open and ingenious behaviour! An honeſt, unſuſpicious heart diffuſes a ſerenity over life like that of a fine day, when no cloud conceals the blue æther, nor a blaſt ruffles the ſtillneſs of the air;—but a crafty and deſigning boſom is all tumult and darkneſs, and may be ſaid to reſemble a miſty and diſordered atmoſphere in the comfortleſs climate of the poor Highlander. The one raiſes a man almoſt to the rank of an angel of light; the other ſinks him to a level with the powers of darkneſs.—The one conſtitutes a terreſtrial heaven in the breaſt, the other deforms and debaſes it till it becomes another hell.

An open and ingenuous diſpoſition is not only beautiful and moſt conducive to private happineſs, but productive of many virtues eſſential to the welfare of ſociety. What is ſociety without confidence? But if the ſelfiſh and mean ſyſtem which is eſtabliſhed and recommended among many whoſe advice and example have weight, ſhould univerſally prevail, in whom, and in what ſhall we be able to confide?—It is already ſhocking to a liberal mind to obſerve what a multitude of papers, parchments, oaths, and ſolemn engagements is required, even in a trivial negociation. On the contrary, how comfortable and how honourable to human nature, if promiſes were bonds, and aſſertions affidavits. What pleaſure and what improvement would be derived from converſation, if every one would dare to ſpeak his real ſenti-

ments, with modesty and decorum indeed, but without any unmanly fear of offending, or servile desire to please for the sake of interest? To please by honest means, and from the pure motives of friendship and philanthropy, is a duty; but they who study the art of pleasing merely for their own sakes, are, of all characters, those which ought least to please, and which appear, when the masque is removed, the most disgustful. Truth, and simplicity of manners, are not only essential to virtue and happiness, but as objects of taste, truly beautiful. Good minds will always be pleased with them, and bad minds we need not wish to please.

Since cunning and deceit are thus odious in themselves, and incompatible with real happiness and dignity, I cannot help thinking, that those instructors of the rising generation, who have insisted on simulation and dissimulation, on the *pensieri stretti*, on the thousand tricks of worldly wisdom, are no less mistaken in their ideas, than mean, contracted, and illiberal Listen not ye generous young men, whose hearts are yet untainted, listen not to the delusive advice of men so deluded or so base, Have courage enough to avow the sentiments of your souls, and let your countenance and your tongue be the heralds of your hearts. Please, consistently with truth and honour, or be contented not to please. Let justice and benevolence fill your bosom, and they will shine spontaneously, like the real gem without the aid of a foil, and with the most durable and captivating brilliancy.

No. CL. A REMEDY FOR DISCONTENT

COMPLAINTS and murmurs are often loudest and most frequent among those who possess all the external means of temporal enjoyment. Something is still wanting, however high and opulent their condition, fully to complete their satisfaction. Suppose an indulgent Providence to accomplish every desire; are they now at last contented? Alas! no; their uneasiness seems for ever to increase, in proportion as their real necessities are diminished.

It is in vain then to endeavour to make them happy by adding to their ſtore, or aggrandizing their honours. Their appetite is no leſs inſatiable than their taſte faſtidious.

But there yet may remain a remedy. Let thoſe, who are miſerable among riches and grandeur, leave, for a moment, their elevated rank, and deſcend from their palaces to the humble habitations of real and unaffected woe. If their hearts are not deſtitute of feeling, they will return from the ſad ſcenes to their cloſets, and on their knees pour fourth the ejaculations of gratitude to that univerſal Parent, who has given them abundance, and exempted them from the thouſand ills under the preſſure of which the greater part of his children drag the load of life. Inſtead of ſpending their hours in brooding over their own imaginary evils, they will devote them to the alleviation of real miſery among the deſtitute ſons of Indigence, in the neglected walks of vulgar life.

That one half of the world knows not how the other half lives, is a common and juſt obſervation. A fine lady, ſurrounded with every means of accommodation and luxury, complains in a moment of *ennui*, that ſurely no moral is ſo wretched as herſelf. Her ſufferings are too great for her acute ſenſibility. She expects pity from all her acquaintance and pleaſes herſelf with the idea that ſhe is an example of ſingular misfortune and remarkable patience. Phyſicians attend, and with affected ſolicitude feel the healthy pulſe, which, however, they dare not pronounce healthy, leſt they ſhould give offence by attempting to ſpoil the refined luxury of fancied woe. To be ſuppoſed always ill, and conſequently to be always exciting the tender attention and enquiries of all around, is a ſtate ſo charming in the ideas of the weak, luxurious, and indolent minds of ſome faſhionable ladies, that many ſpend their lives in a perpetual ſtate of imaginary convaleſcence. There is ſomething ſo indelicate in being hale, hearty, and ſtout, like a roſy milk-maid, that a very fine and very high-bred lady is almoſt ready to faint at the idea. From exceſſive indulgence, ſhe becomes at laſt in reality, what ſhe at firſt only fancied herſelf, a perpetual invalid. By a juſt retribution, ſhe is really puniſhed with that wretchedneſs of which ſhe ungratefully and unreaſonably complained in the midſt of health, eaſe, and opulence.

One might ask all the sisterhood and fraternity of rich and healthy murmurers, Have you compared your situation and circumstances with that of those of your fellow-creatures who are condemned to labour in the gold mines of Peru? Have you compared your situation with that of those of your own country, who have hardly ever seen the sun, but live confined in tin mines, lead mines, stone quarries, and coal pits? Before you call yourself wretched, take a survey of the goals, in which unfortunate and honest debtors are doomed to pine for life; walk through the wards of an hospital; think of the hardships of a common soldier or sailor; think of the galley-slave, the day labourer; nay, the common servant in your own house; think of your poor neighbour at the next door; and if there were not danger of its being called unpolite and methodistical, I would add, think of Him who, for your sake, sweated, as it were, drops of blood on Calvary.

It is, indeed, a duty to consider the evils of those who are placed beneath us; for the chief purpose of christianity is, to alleviate the miseries of that part of mankind, whom, indeed, the world despises; but whom, He who made them, pities, like as a father pitieth his own children. Their miseries are not fanciful, their complaints are not exaggerated. The clergy, when they are called upon to visit the sick, or to baptize new-born infants, are often spectators of such scenes as would cure the discontented of every malady. The following representation is but too real, and may be paralleled in many of its circumstances in almost every parish throughout the kingdom.

The minister of a country village was called upon to baptize an infant just born. The cottage was situated on a lonely common, and as it was in the midst of the winter, and the floods were out, it was absolutely necessary to wade in water through the lower room to a ladder, which served instead of stairs. The chamber (and it was the only one) was so low, that you could not stand upright in it; there was one window which admitted air as freely as light, for the rags which had been stuffed into the broken panes were now taken out to contribute to the covering of the infant. In a dark corner of the room stood a small bedstead

without furniture, and on it lay the dead mother, who had juſt expired in labour for want of aſſiſtance. The father was ſitting on a little ſtool by the fire-place, though there was no fire, and endeavouring to keep the infant warm in his boſom. Five of the ſeven children, half naked, were aſking their father for a piece of bread, while a fine boy, of about three years old, was ſtanding by his mother at the bed-ſide, and crying as he was wont to do, "Take me, take "me, mammy!"—"Mammy is aſleep" ſaid one of his ſiſters, with two tears ſtanding on her cheeks; "mammy is "aſleep, Johnny, go play with the baby on daddy's knee." The father took him up on his knee, and his grief, which had hitherto kept him dumb, and in a ſtate of temporary inſenſibility, burſt out in a torrent of tears, and relieved his heart, which ſeemed ready to break. "Don't cry, pray "don't cry," ſaid the eldeſt boy, "the nurſe is coming "up ſtairs with a two-penny loaf in her hand, and mammy "will wake preſently, and I will carry her the largeſt "piece." Upon this, an old woman, crooked with age, and cloathed in tatters came hobbling on her little ſtick into the room, and, after heaving a groan, calmly ſat down, dreſſed the child in its rags, then divided the loaf as far as it would go, and informed the poor man that the church-wardens, to whom ſhe had gone, would ſend ſome relief, as ſoon as they had diſpatched a naughty baggage to her own pariſh, who had delivered herſelf of twins in the eſquire's hovel. Relief indeed was ſent, and a little contribution afterwards raiſed by the interpoſition of the miniſter. If he had not ſeen the caſe, it would have paſſed on as a common affair, and a thing of courſe.

Miniſters and medical practitioners are often witneſſes to ſcenes even more wretched than this; where, to poverty, cold, nakedneſs, and death, are added the languors of lingering and loathſome diſeaſes, and the torments of excruciating pain. A feeling heart, among the rich and the great, who are at the ſame time querulous without cauſe, would learn a leſſon in many a garret of Broad St. Giles's or Shoreditch, more efficacious than all the lectures of the moral or divine philoſopher.

I cannot help mentioning and applauding a mode of cha-

rity of late much encouraged in this metropolis, which is indeed diſtinguiſhed above all others for the wiſdom and variety of its eleemoſynary inſtitutions. Diſpenſaries are eſtabliſhed for the poor and patients viſited at their own habitations by phyſicians of allowed ſkill and diſtinguiſhed character. I will only take the liberty to expreſs a wiſh, that ſome regulations may be made to prevent this noble deſign from being perverted, like many others, to purpoſes of private intereſt.

No. CLI. ON THE UTILITY OF RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES, AND OF ADMITTING MUSIC AND EXTERNAL MAGNIFICENCE IN PLACES OF DEVOTION.

IF all men were enlightened by education and philoſophy, and at all hours actuated by the principles of reaſon, it would be unneceſſary to have recourſe to external objects in producing devout and virtuous affections. But as there muſt always be a great majority, who, from the want of opportunities or capacities for improvement, are weak and ignorant; and as even among the wiſe and learned there are none who are conſtantly exempted from the common infirmities of human nature, it becomes expedient to deviſe modes of operating on the ſoul through the medium of the ſenſes. It was for this reaſon, that in all great communities the officers and offices of religion have been ſurrounded with whatever is calculated to rouſe the attention, to intereſt the heart, to ſtrike the eye, and to elevate the imagination.

I cannot help thinking, therefore, that thoſe well-meaning reformers, who wiſh to diveſt religion of external ſplendour are unacquainted with the nature of man, or influenced by narrow motives. They mean, perhaps to ſpiritualize every thing, and the purpoſe is laudable; but they know not, or they conſider not, that ordinary ſpirits, ſuch as are thoſe of the vicious and vulgar, are moſt eaſily and effectually touched by the inſtrumentality of exterior and material objects. He who wiſhes to penetrate to the receſſes of the vulgar ſoul, will ſucceed better by the co-operati-

on of the eyes and the ears, than merely by addreſſing the rational faculty.

An idea may be formed of the potency of ſounds and ſights, unaſſiſted by reaſon, if we contemplate their effect in war. The drum, the fife, the habiliments of a ſoldier, the flag, and all the pomp and parade of military tranſactions, contribute, perhaps, more than any ſenſe of duty, or any native or acquired ſentiments of bravery, to lead on the embattled phalanx even to the cannon's mouth. It is ſomething operating in the mind in a ſimilar manner, which moſt eaſily bows the ſtubborn knee of the hardened offender, and ſubdues to ſoftneſs the ſteely heart on which no force of argument could of itſelf ſtamp an impreſſion. There are few who cannot here or ſee, but many who cannot underſtand. All can feel a poweful ſtroke on the fancy or paſſions, but few, in compariſon, are affected by a ſyllogiſm.

Muſic therefore, poetry, painting, and architecture, may very reaſonably be aſſociated as auxiliaries of Reaſon, an empreſs, whoſe ſubjects are rebellious. And I cannot help thinking, that they who repudiate all ornament, and all the modes of affecting the ſenſes of the vulgar in the offices of religion, as indecent, impious, or improper, do not recollect the temple of Solomon, but ſuffer their good ſenſe to be overpowered in this inſtance by the zeal of a barbarous faniticiſm.

The offices of religion where muſic and artificial embelliſhments are admitted, become ſo alluring, that thoſe who would never think of their more ſerious duties, are often invited by them to the church, and gradually converted. Like the rake of antiquity, who mingled in the audience of a philoſopher with a deſign to ridicule him, but who was made a convert before his departure, many of the looſe and profligate votaries of vice have been inticed by the muſic and afterwards reformed by the ſermon, which they intended to ſlight, and perhaps had begun to deride.

The proceſſions and pompous formalities of religion, however exploded in the warmth of reformation as papiſtical relics, are certainly uſeful in the community, when they are not ſuffered to exceed the bounds of moderation. They were eſteemed and obſerved in ancient Athens and ancient Rome, by thoſe who loved and enjoyed liberty in its fulleſt

extent. They were found to aggrandize the majesty of empire, to inspire a generous enthusiasm in the minds of the people, and to furnish them with an amusement, not only innocent and improving, but attended with a very high and satisfactory pleasure. None can detest popery more than myself; but yet it appears to me, that many of the splended and august scenes which that persuasion admits, are highly useful, if considerd only as furnishing a harmless entertainment to the lower orders of mankind. What charms can a London carman, chairman, hackney-coachman, fishwoman, find in an English meeting or a church? but they would be delighted, and very powerfully affected with the grandeur and solemnity of a Romish procession. As we have no allurements adapted to their ignorant and rude minds, they spend the Sunday at an alehouse, even at the next door to the church, without a wish to enter the consecrated place. All that passes there is above their comprehension. They are but little removed from the state of the brutes, and they must remain so; for there is nothing, in the only places in which they have an opportunity of instruction, to strike their imaginations, and penetrate, through the passage of the senses, to the recesses of the dormant soul.

It is true indeed, that we admit music in the established church; but it is also true, that it is in general a kind of music which is little better than discord to the vulgar ear. For in the metropolis, where organs are chiefly to be found, the performers are too fond of shewing their powers of execution, and seldom play those simple tunes which can alone affect the minds of the simple and uninformed.

There has been much conversation on the subject of adorning St. Paul's cathedral with the productions of the pencil. Many artists, it is said, have offered to contribute the efforts of their ingenuity. Some scruples have arisen to impede the design. In this age they cannot be puritanical. I really think that judicious paintings would produce a desirable effect on the morals of the lower classes. But if painting is not to be admitted, there surely can be no objection to sculpture. Westminster-abbey is crowded with monuments; and I will venture to predict, that our posterity will see St. Paul's equally honoured. I hope the event

will not take place so late as to exclude such artists as Bacon, or if painting is admitted, such as Reynolds, West, and Romney.

With an union of architecture, poetry, music, and painting, we may exlaim with Bruyere: "Que de magnificence "et de dignité dans le culte divin! que d' élévation dans "les Pseaumes! que de majesté dans les chants! que de "pompe dans les solemnités! tout édifie et tout annonce "la présence du Saint des Saints."

No. CLII. ON THE PRESENT STATE OF PARLIAMENTARY ELOQUENCE.

IN taking a view of parliamentary eloquence, I mean to consider it as totally independent of party and politics, and solely as a subject of literary taste. It must be a peculiar narrowness of spirit which bestows or refuses applause to the productions of genius, because they are found to favour either a court or an opposition. I would allow an equal share of praise to equal genius, whether it appeared in a leader of the minority, or in the first minister of state.

The speeches from the throne are little more than the formalities of office. It would be unreasonable to expect in them the fire, the pathos, the argument of genuine and animated oratory. But they possess an air of dignity highly proper and characteristical. They breathe a spirit of sincerity and paternal tenderness, which at once marks the judgment of the composer, and endears the speaker to his people. There was one on the commencement of the war with America, which deserves to be selected as a very spirited and memorable harangue. It would have adorned the page of a Livy. "The resolutions of parliament," said his Majesty, "breathed a spirit of moderation and forbear-"ance.—I have acted with the same temper; anxious to "prevent, if it had been possible, the effusion of the blood "of my subjects, and the calamities which are inseperable "from a state of war; still hoping, that my people in "America would have discerned the traiterous views of

" their leaders, and have been convinced, that to be a sub-
" ject to Great Britain, with all its consequences, is to be
" the freest member of any civil society in the known world.
" The rebellious war now levied is become more gene-
" ral, and is manifestly carried on for the purpose of esta-
" blishing an independent empire. I need not dwell on the
" fatal effects of the success of such a plan. The object is
" too important, the spirit of the British nation too high,
" the resources with which God hath blessed her too nu-
" merous, to give up so many colonies which she has plant-
" ed with great industry, nursed with great tenderness, en-
" couraged with many commercial advantages, and pro-
" tected and defended at much expence of blood and trea-
" sure.——The constant employment of my thoughts, and
" the most earnest wishes of my heart, tend wholly to the
" safety and happiness of all my people."——The spirit of a great king, and the tender solicitude which speaks the true father of his people, render this speech truly excellent, and, indeed, its excellence was evinced by its effects; for soon after it was disseminated over the nation, the American war, which was once universally odious, became a popular measure. Little did the composer of the above passage conceive, that in a few years the *high spirit of the British nation* would be reduced to the humiliating necessity of almost supplicating for peace the *deluded* people of America.

In an assembly, like the higher house, consisting of men, in whose education no expence has been spared, who are, or who ought to be, animated by their own exalted situation and the examples of an illustrious ancestry, one might reasonably expect to find frequent examples of distinguished eloquence. But it really would be difficult to name a single peer who has attracted notice or admiration for the classical elegance of his matter or his language. The law lords, relying on their professional knowledge, do, indeed, frequently make long and bold speeches. Accustomed to brow-beat the evidence at the bar, and dictate on the bench, some of them have retained their insolence and effrontery when advanced to the woolsack. But noise, obstinacy, and imperious dictation, cannot please an Attic or a Roman taste, nor obtain the praise of pure and legitimate oratory. Its

rough and boiſterous vehemence may, indeed, frighten a puiſne race of peers into an implicit acquieſcence with the will of a miniſter, but it will not deſerve the eſteem of thoſe who, in the receſſes of their libraries, appreciate its merit as a work of literature. A few dukes and lords in oppoſition have not been deficient in noiſe nor in violence, but their barbarous language, matter, and manner, muſt aſſign them a rank among the Goths, and not among the poliſhed ſons of Athens and Rome. Of all the ſpeeches ſpoken in the houſe, how few have ever been collected and preſerved in libraries, as models of claſſical elegance! Paſſion and perſonal animoſity have, indeed, produced many invectives, which gratify the ſpleen of party, and are for the time extolled beyond all the productions of preceding ingenuity. But is there extant a ſingle volume of ſpeeches, by the moſt famous among the orators of the upper houſe, which can be produced as a claſſical book, or ſtand in competition with the orations of Cicero? I think it neceſſary to repeat, that my remarks have not the leaſt reference to party. I am in ſearch of an orator, to whom the epithet of claſſical may be juſtly applied. I regret that the fury of party and the meanneſs of ſervility, has for the moſt part excluded that true taſte, true grace, and true ſpirit which is neceſſary to form a claſſical orator, from the harangues of an aſſembly juſtly deemed the moſt auguſt in Europe.

The Houſe of Commons has always been eſteemed a very diſtinguiſhed theatre of modern eloquence. And there indeed, notwithſtanding the ſame impediments which prevail among the peers, it is eaſy to produce many ſplendid examples. In the Houſe of Commons, men have been ſtimulated by the moſt powerful motives, by the hopes of riſing; in the Houſe of Lords they have already riſen. But though we join in the applauſe of common fame, yet let us aſk, where are to be found the volumes of oratorical elegance? Have the ſpeeches which have gained the praiſe of admiring kingdoms, been no where collected and recorded? Do we lock them up in our book-caſes, and put them into the hands of our children as models for imitations, as leſſons to form their young minds, and raiſe a ſucceſſion of orators and patriots? No; the ſpeeches are celebrated at firſt, and

while they anſwer a temporary purpoſe. They are like vegetables of a night, or inſects of a day. They have ſeldom that ſolidity of merit which can render the ore valuable when the ſtamp is effaced, and the occaſion of it almoſt forgotten and quite diſregarded; which can preſerve the plate ſtill ſaleable after the faſhion is antiquated. Glorious was the eloquence of Mr. Pitt. Nations ſhook at the thunder of his voice. But where are the harangues? are they preſerved as illuſtrious models for the inſtruction of poſterity? Inſtead of being engraven on braſs, they are almoſt ſunk into an oblivion, like the ſoldiers whoſe bones once whitened the plains of Germany. Yet I mean not to detract from his glories. Language can ſcarcely ſupply terms to expreſs the weight of his authority, the magnitude of his mind and his character, and the efficacy with which he thought, decided, ſpoke, and acted. But let it not eſcape the reader's attention, that we are enquiring for a rival to the maſterly and tranſcendent excellence of a Cicero and a Demoſthenes. If ſuch has of late appeared among us, the curioſity of this age would have preſerved it; and if it be preſerved, let the volume be openly produced, and the public will embrace it as an invaluable treaſure.

There are, indeed, in the ſenate, ſeveral deſperate declaimers, who, wiſhing to make themſelves of conſequence, and to retrieve their own affairs, which they have ruined at the gaming-table, exert all their effrontery and all their volubility in any cauſe, and on any ſide, which eventually may promote their intereſt, or gratify their ambition. The ignorant and diſcontented extol the bravado who thus draws courage from deſpair, as a prodigy of abilities, and the mirror of eloquence. But the good, the wiſe, and the judicious obſerver, pities and deſpiſes him as an unprincipled brawler, with as little taſte in eloquence as honeſty; and as the mere rival of the noiſy ſpouters at the forum, or the Robinhood.

The applauſe indeed beſtowed on one orator, is ſcarcely adequate to his literary merit. Mr. Burke has produced to the world very honourable teſtimonies of his natural abilities and his acquired taſte. What orations are there publiſhed of modern members, which can bear a compariſon

with thoſe of Mr. Burke? With what dignity he addreſſed the people of Briſtol; and how mean and little did they appear, contraſted with him whom they rejected! Like Socrates before the judges, he appeared more like their maſter than their ſuppliant. He concludes with a ſpirit worthy of him who wrote on the ſublime and beautiful; worthy of a poliſhed ancient in the beſt of ages—"And "now, gentlemen," he concludes, "on this ſerious day, "when I come, as it were, to make up my account with "you; let me take to myſelf ſome degree of honeſt pride "on the nature of the charges brought againſt me. I do "not here ſtand accuſed of venality, or neglect of duty. "It is not ſaid that, in the long period of my ſervice, I "have, in a ſingle inſtance, ſacrificed the ſlighteſt of your "intereſts to my ambition or to my fortune. It is not al-"leged, that to gratify any anger or revenge of my own, "or of my party, I have had a ſhare in wronging or op-"preſſing any one man in any deſcription.—No; the charg-"es againſt me are all of one kind, that I have puſhed the "general principles of general juſtice and benevolence too "far; further than a cautious policy would warrant, and "further than the opinions of many would go with me. In "every accident which may happen through life, in pain, "in ſorrow, in depreſſion, and diſtreſs, I will think of this "accuſation, and be comforted."

There are not indeed many of the members who favour the public with their harangues, ſo that we have not an opportunity of judging of all ſo well as of Mr. Burke's. We muſt, however, acknowledge our great obligations to the ingenious Mr. Woodfall, whoſe memory ſeems equal to the inſtances of which we read, but which do not often occur in our intercourſe with ſociety.

No. CLIII. A LIFE OF LETTERS USUALLY A LIFE OF COMPARATIVE INNOCENCE.

IT is not the leaſt among the happy effects of a ſtudious life, that it withdraws the ſtudent from the turbulent ſcenes and purſuits, in which it is ſcarcely leſs difficult to

preſerve innocence than tranquillity. Succeſsful ſtudy requires ſo much attention, and engroſſes ſo much of the heart, that he who is deeply engaged in it, though he may indeed be liable to temporary lapſes, will ſeldom contract an inveterate habit of immorality. There is in all books of character a reverence for virtue, and a tendency to inſpire a laudable emulation. He who is early, long, and ſucceſsfully converſant with them, will find his boſom filled with the love of truth, and finely affected with a delicate ſenſe of honour. By conſtantly exerciſing his reaſon, his paſſions are gradually reduced to ſubjection, and his head and heart keep pace with each other in improvement. But when I aſſert that ſuch are the conſequences of literary purſuits, it is neceſſary to diſtinguiſh between the real and pretended ſtudent; for there are many deſultory readers, and volatile men of parts, who affect eccentricity, whoſe lives, if one may ſo expreſs it, are uniformly irregular, and who conſequently exhibit remarkable inſtances of miſery and misfortune.

Folly and imprudence will produce moral and natural evil, their genuine offspring, in all ſituations and modes of life. The knowledge of arts and ſciences cannot prevent the vices and the woes which muſt ariſe from the want of knowing how to regulate our private and ſocial conduct. But where prudence and virtue are not deficient, I believe few walks of life are pleaſanter and ſafer than thoſe which lead through the regions of literature.

Many among mankind are involved in perpetual tumult, ſo that when they feel an inclination to conſider their duty, their nature, their trueſt happineſs, they can ſcarcely find an opportunity. But he, whom Providence has bleſſed with an enlightened mind, and the command of his own time, is enabled to form his heart, and direct his choice, according to the dictates of the moſt improved intellects, and the examples of the moſt accompliſhed characters. He is, indeed, a creature far ſuperior to the common herd of men; and being acquainted with pure and exalted pleaſures, lies not under the neceſſity of ſeeking delight in the groſſer gratifications. He conſiders not property as the chief good; he is therefore free from temptations to violate his integrity.

Disappointment in matters of interest will never render him uneasy or discontented, for his books have discovered to him a treasure more valuable, in his estimation, than the riches of Peru. Through all the vicissitudes of life, he has a source of consolation in the retirement of his library, and in the principles and reflections of his own bosom. From his reading he will collect a just estimate of the world and of all around him; and, as he will cherish no unreasonable expectations, he will be exempted from severe disappointment.

The conversation of many abounds with slander and detraction, not originally and entirely derived from a malignity of nature, but also from ignorance, from a vacancy of intellect, and from an inability to expatiate on general and generous topics. But whatever be the motive of them, it is certain that few crimes are more injurious to private happiness, and opposite to the spirit of our amiable religion, than slander and detraction. The man of reading is under no temptation to calumniate his neighbour from the defect of ideas, or a want of taste for liberal and refined conversation. He interests himself in his neighbour's happiness; but does not pry into the affairs, nor sit in judgment on the domestic arrangements of another's family. Most of the topics of scandal are too little and too low for him. He will not stoop from his elevation low enough to pick the dirty trifles from the ground. His thoughts are engaged in elegant and speculative subjects, far removed from all which tend to excite envy, jealousy, or malevolence.

The want of employment is one of the frequent causes of vice; but he who loves a book will never want employment. The pursuits of learning are boundless, and they present to the mind a delightful variety which cannot be exhausted. No life is long enough to see all the beautiful pictures which the arts and sciences, or which history, poetry, and eloquence are able to display. The man of letters possesses the power of calling up a succession of scenes to his view infinitely numerous and diversified. He is therefore secured from that unhappy state which urges many to vice and dissipation, merely to fill a painful vacuity. Even though his pursuits should be trifling, and his discoveries

unimportant, yet they are harmleſs to others, and uſeful to himſelf, as preſervatives of his innocence. Let him not be ridiculed or condemned, even though he ſhould ſpend his time in collecting and deſcribing moths, moſſes, ſhells, birds, weeds, or coins; for he who loves theſe things ſeldom ſets his affections on pelf, or any of thoſe objects which corrupt and divide human ſociety. He who finds his pleaſures in a muſeum or a library, will not often be ſeen in the tavern, in the brothel, or at the gaming-table. He is pleaſed if he poſſeſſes a non-deſcript foſſil, and envies not the wretched enjoyments of the intemperate, nor the ill-gotten wealth of the oppreſſor or extortioner.

But his purſuits have uſually a title to much greater praiſe than that of being inoffenſive. Suppoſe him in any of the liberal profeſſions. If a clergyman, for inſtance, he devotes his time and abilities to the preparation of diſſuaſives from vice, from folly, from miſconduct, from infidelity, from all that contributes to aggravate the wretchedneſs of wretched human nature. Here the pleaſures naturally reſulting from literary occupation are improved by the ſublime ſenſations of active benevolence, the comfortable conſciouſneſs of advancing the trueſt happineſs of thoſe among our poor fellow-creatures who have not enjoyed the advantages of education. In the performance of the godlike office of a true pariſh prieſt, there is a neceſſity of ſetting an example, and of preſerving decorum of character; a neceſſity which conduces much to the ſecurity of innocence. It is often a great happineſs to be placed in a rank where, to the reſtraints of conſcience and morality, are added the fear of peculiar ſhame, loſs, and diſgrace, neceſſarily conſequent on ill behaviour. Human nature wants every ſupport to keep it from lapſing into depravity. Even intereſt and a ſolicitude for reputation, when, in ſome thoughtleſs interval, the pillars of virtue begin to totter, may ſtop the fall. The poſſeſſion of a valuable character which may be loſt, and of a dignity which muſt be ſupported, are often very uſeful auxilliaries in defending the citadel againſt the temporary aſſaults of paſſion and temptation.

Since, then, the purſuit of letters is attended with many circumſtances peculiarly favourable to innocence, and con-

sequently to enjoyment of the purest and most permanent species, they who have been fixed in so desirable a life as a life of learning, ought to be grateful to Providence for their fortunate lot, and endeavour to make the best return in their power, by devoting their leisure, their abilities, and their acquirements, to performing the will of God, and promoting the benefit of mankind.

No. CLIV. ON THE ADVANTAGE WHICH MAY BE DERIVED TO THE TENDER AND PATHETIC STYLE, FROM USING THE WORDS AND PHRASES OF SCRIPTURE.

IT is observable that an audience often laughs or yawns in the most interesting scenes of a modern tragedy;—a lamentable proof of the poet's imbecility. The poet! he may, indeed, be a versifier and a declaimer, but he is no poet, who tells a tragic tale without eliciting a tear. Let us not profane the sacred name of poet by bestowing it on the feeble poetaster.

It is not enough that the language of a tragedy is flowery, the similies and metaphors brilliant, the verse melodious; there must be a charm added by the creative power of almighty genius, which no didactic rules can teach, which cannot be adequately described, but which is powerfully felt by the vibrations of the heart strings, and which causes an irresistible overflowing of the DARRYOR PEGAI, the *sacri fontes lachrymarum.*

Florid diction and pompous declamation are, indeed, found to be the least adapted of all modes of address to affect the finer sensibilities of nature. Plain words, without epithets, without metaphors, without similies, have oftener excited emotions of the tenderest sympathy, than the most laboured composition of Corneille. Ye who would learn to touch the heart, go not to the schools of France, but become the disciples of Sophocles, Shakespeare, Sterne, and Chatterton. Thou captivating simplicity! 'tis thine at once to effect what all the artifices of rhetoric, with all

its tropes and figures, tediously and vainly labour to accomplish. 'Tis thine to dissolve the hardest heart, and to force even stubborn nerves to tremble. A few words of simple pathos will penetrate the soul to the quick, when a hundred lines of declamation shall assail it as feebly and ineffectually as a gentle gale the mountain of Plinlimmon.

A writer of taste and genius may avail himself greatly in pathetic compositions, by adopting the many words and phrases, remarkable for their beautiful simplicity, which are interspersed in that pleasing, as well as venerable book, the holy bible. I cannot, indeed, entirely agree with those zealous critics who pretend to discover in the scriptures all the graces of all the best classics. To please the ear and imagination, were very inferior objects in the benevolent mind of Him who caused all holy scriptures to be written for our life. But, at the same, time it is certain they abound in such beauties as never fail to please the most cultivated taste. Besides their astonishing sublimity, they have many a passage exquisitely tender and pathetic. Our admirable translation has preserved them in all their beauty, and an English writer may select from it a diction better suited to raise the sympathy of grief, than from the most celebrated models of human composition.

Sterne, who, though he is justly condemned for his libertinism, possessed an uncommon talent for the pathetic, has availed himself greatly of the scriptural language. In all his most affecting passages, he has imitated the turn, style, manner, and simplicity, of the sacred writers, and in many of them has transcribed whole sentences. He found no language of his own could equal the finely expressive diction of our common translation. There are a thousand instances of his imitating scripture interspersed in all the better parts of his works, and no reader of common observation can pass by them unnoticed. I will quote only one or two instances taken from the most admired pieces in the tender style.—"Maria, though not tall, was nevertheless of the first order "of fine forms. Affliction had touched her looks with "something that was scarce earthly, and so much was "there about her of all that the heart wishes, or the eye

" looks for in woman, that could the traces be ever worn " out of her brain, or thoſe of Eliza out of mine, ſhe " ſhould not only eat of my bread, and drink of my cup, " but Maria ſhould lie in my boſom, and be unto me as a " daughter.

" Adieu, poor luckleſs maden! imbibe the oil and wine " which the compaſſion of a ſtranger, as he ſojourneth on " his way, now pours into thy wounds. The Being who " has twice bruiſed thee can only bind them up for ever." Again, in his deſcription of the captive. " As I darkened " the little light he had, he lifted up a hopeleſs eye towards " the door, then caſt it down, ſhook his head, and went " on with his work of affliction. I heard his chains upon " his legs, as he turned his body to lay his little ſtick upon " the bundle. He gave a deep ſigh. I ſaw the iron enter " into his ſoul." It is eaſy, but it is not neceſſary, to adduce many more inſtances in which a writer, who eminently excelled in the power of moving the affections, felt himſelf unequal to the taſk of advancing the ſtyle of pathos to its higheſt perfection, and ſought aſſiſtance of the Bible.

It is eaſy to ſee that the writer of ſo many tender and ſimple paſſages had imitated the delightful book of Ruth. With what pleaſure did a man of his feelings read, " Intreat " me not to leave thee, or to return from following after " thee; for whither thou goeſt, I will go; and where thou " lodgeſt, I will lodge; thy people ſhall be my people, and " thy God my God; where thou dieſt will I die, and there " will I be buried." Sterne ſtole the very ſpirit of this paſſage, and indeed of all the fine ſtrokes of tenderneſs, and many an one there is, in a book which is often laid aſide by polite ſcholars as abſurd and obſolete. The choice which Sterne has made of texts and of citations from the ſcriptures in his ſermons, are proofs that he (who was one of the beſt judges of the pathetic) was particularly ſtruck with the affecting tenderneſs and lovely ſimplicity of ſcriptural language.

The poet, therefore, who means to produce a tragedy, which ſhall be able to ſtand its ground even after the firſt nine nights, without the aid of puffing, and without

filling the pit and boxes with orders, ſhould ſometimes go to the ſame fountain, and drink the warters of poetical inſpiration of which Sterne drank ſo copiouſly. He will improve greatly by ſtudying the language and hiſtories of Joſeph, Saul, and Jonathan, of Ruth, of Job, of the Pſalms, of Iſaiah, of Jeremiah, of many ſingle paſſages every where interſperſed, and of the parables in the New Teſtament. Judgment and taſte are certainly neceſſary to ſelect; but he may depend upon it, that a word or two well ſelected will gain him the trueſt applauſe, that which is conveyed in ſighs and tears. Let him fully purſuade himſelf, that the only method of operating powerfully on the feelings of nature, is to renounce art and affectation, and to adhere to truth and ſimplicity.

Something is neceſſary to be done to produce an alteration. The theatric ſtate is in its decline. It cannot much longer be ſupported by fine dreſſes, painted ſcenes, muſic, dancing, and pantomime. We have hearts as well as ears and eyes; if they know not how to touch our paſſions at Old Drury, let us haſten to the Opera-houſe, and ſee the man ſtand upon one leg.

No. CLV. ON THE FIGURE PARRHESIA, OR ON EXPRESSING ONE'S SENTIMENTS FREELY.

THEY, whoſe wiſdom conſiſts in cunning and caution, who conſider preferment as the only or moſt valuable object of human purſuit, and who ſtand in awe of grandeur indepently of perſonal merit and character, will often ſhake their heads as they read my eſſays (if they read them at all, which is not likely,) and blame the writers imprudence, in ventering to expreſs himſelf on many dangerous ſubjects without reverſe. It is madneſs, they exclaim, to cut himſelf off from all chance of eccleſiaſtical preferment, to exclude himſelf from the ſunſhine of patronage; and (to uſe the words of a celebrated orator) "to create a long, dull, dreary, unvaried "viſto of deſpair and excluſion."

But, "O ye wiſe ones of the world," (an honeſt and independent writer might ſay) "ſignificantly as ye whiſper

" among each other, and hug yourſelves on your own pro-
" found ſagacity, I value not your ſpurious wiſdom; and
" though I pretend not to deſpiſe either honours or emolu-
" ments fairly and openly obtained, I think the means ye
" uſe in their purſuit baſe and mean, and that ye purchaſe
" all you poſſeſs at a price too dear. Ye reſign your reaſon,
" your liberty, and, I fear, too often, your truth and ho-
" nour. Ye are real ſlaves, and the robes of office and dig-
" nity, in which ye pride yourſelves, are but the liveries of
" a ſplended ſervitude. From one inſtance of your ſpirit
" and wiſdom let the public judge of all. Dare ye, raiſed
" by a long courſe of mean ſervility to a ſeat in the Britiſh
" ſenate, to give a vote, or expreſs a ſingle ſentiment accor-
" ding to your own judgment, and without firſt religiouſly
" conſulting the god of your idolatry? Cenſure me no
" more for an honeſt freedom. Bluſh rather at your own
" meanneſs and cowardice. Pity me no more, as excluding
" myſelf, by temerity, from the favours of the great. I
" am happier in the liberty of ranging, in thought, through
" all the mazes of human life, and of uttering my undiſ-
" guiſed ſentiments in whatever I ſee and hear, than in
" gaining favour where favour is to be gained, merely by
" ſubmitting to the meanneſs of concealing truth, and
" ſpeaking according to the dictates of ſelf-intereſt alone.
" Blame me no more till you point out the paſſage in the
" goſpel, where boldneſs of rebuke is prohibited, and
" where a profeſſed ſervant of Jeſus Chriſt is taught to bow
" the knee to an unbelieving and debauched ruler of this
" world."

" But you are actuated by envy," ſoftly ſuggeſts the ſucceſsful chaplain, the *quondam* tutor, and travelling companion of a graceleſs duke. " You rail," ſays he, " at
" what you cannot reach."—But, ſir, give me leave to aſk,
" whether you are not actuated by avarice and worldly
" ambition? vices, in a chriſtian paſtor, no leſs culpable
" than envy. By what were you actuated when you gain-
" ed the favour of the patron who raiſed you to your ho-
" nours, merely by drinking and caballing for him at a
" conteſted election? Your patron profeſſes himſelf a deiſt,
" and you know he keeps many concubines. By what

" were you actuated when you were always seeking his " company and dining at his table? Was it a desire to " convert him from the error of his ways? Did you ever " dare to hint your displeasure at them? Did they displease " you?

" And, with respect to envy as the motive of my free- " dom, you will do right to consider, that he who envies, " eagerly wishes to obtain the object. He who eagerly " desires to obtain, usually pursues the most probable " means of success. But you shall judge, by your own " experience, whether what I have said is, in the smallest " degree, like the methods which are found most success- " ful. Does it tally with your own recipe for rising at " court?

" Indeed, sir, you must excuse me. I cannot think as " you do; your objects and mine are totally different, and " must be differently pursued. Enjoy your heard-earned ho- " nours; but let me also enjoy my liberty, or, if you chuse " to call it so, my humour. I will boast a superiority in one " respect; I have no master, save one.

" But you say I am gratifying my vanity. If to seek " an honest fame, be to seek the gratification of my vani- " ty, I plead guilty to the charge. I dare avow a wish to " possess the public esteem, but I pursue no mean or sinister " method to procure it. I rely for their favour on my love " of truth, and the sincerity of my zeal in their service. " Their good opinion is a delightful and sufficient reward. " Not that I ever affected to renounce or to despise pre- " ferment; But it comes unsought for, as well as unlook- " ed for, if it comes at all.

" To preserve the favour of the public, and the appro- " bation of my own heart, I think it necessary to continue, " while I write, the open declaration of my sentiments, " such as they are, equally uninfluenced by mean hopes and " cowardly apprehensions. Individuals may apply, what " was never meant to be applied, to themselves; and, in the " warmth of an exasperated mind, may shew their resentment " by neglect or censure; but time and the public seldom " fail to do final justice.

" Let me then be permitted" (such a writer may pro-

ceed to say in his defence) "to employ myself in peace and "innocence, and to amuse readers of congenial sentiments, "by a free communication of feelings undisguised by art, "and uttered boldly as they were excited warmly, by men "and manners passing in review. Let the sympathetic tribe, "who, in the exuberance of their compassion, express their "anxiety lest I should hurt my interest, reserve their pity "for objects of more merit. I am happy in the idea, that "nothing which I have written can injure the interest of "any one but the writer.

"In times of peculiar exigency" (he might add) "there "may be a moral as well as military heroism. He deserves "to be degraded from his rank, who is not ready to incur "every hazard in the cause which he has justly undertaken; "and not only to forego honours and advantages in the de-"fence of what he deems the truth, but, if circumstances "should require it, to die in its confirmation. A timid and "luke-warm prudence in a good cause is little better than "desertion."

Such, I say, is the apology which an independent writer might make to those who should say to him, *Sunt quibus in satirâ videris nimis acer.* If it contains in it any thing severe, be it remembered, that the severity is applied to manners, not to persons; that no individual is pointed at; and that he who complains of it, probably deserves it.

No. CLVI. ON READING MERELY WITH A VIEW TO AMUSEMENT.

THERE are many who spend much of their time in reading, but who read as they play at cards, with no other intention but to pass the time, without labouring under the intolerable burthen of a total inactivity. The more trifling the book, the better they suppose it suited to their purpose. Plays, pamphlets, memoirs, novels, and whatever entertains them without requiring any great degree of attention, constitute the whole of their library. Even these are read in a desultory manner, without the interference of

taſte or the trouble of ſelection. Indeed this light food for the mind is ſo much wanted, that the circulating libraries lay in a ſtock of it every year; and an aſſortment of ſummer-reading is in as great requeſt at the bookſellers in the watering-places, as a variety of new ſpring patterns at the ſilk-mercers in Pall-mall. The fine lady and gentleman, who have nothing to do but to purſue their amuſement, and in whoſe delicate minds the dreſſing of the hair is a buſineſs of the firſt importance, commonly ſpend two or three hours every day under the hands of the friſeur; but then the time is by no means waſted, for it is ſpent in ſummer-reading; and as the volumes which contain ſummer-reading are not large folios, and neither printed on the ſmalleſt type, nor on the moſt crowded page, one of them juſt ſerves to fill up the morning hours devoted to the artiſt of the comb. The gentle ſtudent riſes from his chair when the operation is completed, takes off his flannel gown, ſends back the half-bound book to the library, and enters upon the momentous buſineſs of *making calls*, without any odious gravity or ſerioufneſs, which might perhaps have remained with him, had his morning ſtudies required deep thought, or communicated to him a ſeries of ſober reflections. He can indeed, in a rainy day, devour half a dozen volumes of ſummer-reading, and be no more incommoded than when he ſwallows as many puffs and ſyllabubs at the faſhionable confectioners.

It muſt be allowed that this kind of reading, trifling as it is, may often conſtitute an amuſing and a very innocent paſtime. But I will venture to ſay, that uſeful and improving reading might be found, that ſhould be equally, and indeed more entertaining. The ſame time ſpent on books of character, which is laviſhed away on literary traſh, would render many a mind, which is now vain and ſuperficial, really elegant, prudent, and well-informed. The time ſpent under the operation of the hair-dreſſer is very properly ſpent in reading; but why ſhould not the works of the Engliſh claſſics be uſed in preference to a vile tranſlation from a fooliſh French novel? To a taſte not vitiated, the works of Shakeſpeare, Milton, Dryden, Pope, Addiſon, and many other of their ſucceſsful followers, are much more

pleasing than the inelegant and hasty productions of hireling writers, whose indigence compels them to be less solicitous about quality than quantity; who study not so much what is congruous to taste and truth, as what will catch the notice of the general reader, and answer the venal purpose of their employer by a rapid sale. Have we not many true histories, elegant in their style, abounding with matter most improving to the heart and understanding, and calculated to interest and entertain, in a very high degree, by gratifying curiosity? Unless we renounce our pretensions to reason, we must confess that such books are capable of furnishing more pleasure, exclusively of the improvement, than anonymous and unauthenticated anecdotes, memoirs, novels, voyages, travels, lives, and adventures.

There are those who have read more volumes than the profoundest scholars in the nation, who are yet unacquainted with the elements of science, with the most interesting facts of true history, with the maxims of philosophy, with the beauties of style, and with the extent and force of the language. They have read inattentively what indeed was scarcely worth attention; and they have immediately forgotten what was too futile to deserve remembrance. Had they possessed judgment sufficient to point out the proper books, and resolution to pursue the dictates of their judgment, they would have enriched their minds with inestimable treasures, and acquired the reputation and satisfaction of solid scholars. The same exertion of their eyes, the same consumption of their time, the same sedentary confinement, would have earned a prize of sufficient value to repay them amply for every effort of diligence. But now they have, perhaps, injured their eyes, ruined their health, neglected their affairs, vitiated their taste, and possibly corrupted their morals, or weakened their faith, with no return, but the amusement of the moment, or the retention of false facts, distorted figures of life and manners, or trifling anecdotes, the lumber of the head and not the furniture.

Persons advanced in life, or labouring under sickness and infirmity, have an unquestionable right to amuse themselves with whatever can innocently alleviate their evils, and enable them to pass away the lagging hours in a sweet and

tranſitory oblivion. Their reading, like their diet, may be light, and more adapted to tickle a ſickly palate, than to afford ſolid and ſubſtantial nouriſhment. But in youth, health, and vigour, who would voluntarily confine themſelves to the weakneſs and inſipidity of water-gruel?

It is, indeed, lamentable to obſerve young perſons of lively parts, and with a love of reading, devoting thoſe years and thoſe abilities, which might render them valuable members of ſociety, to ſuch ſtudies as tend only to diſſipate their ideas, to vitiate their morals, to womanize their ſpirits, and to render them the daſtardly and degenerate ſons of thoſe to whom it was once a glorious diſtinction to bear the name of Britons.

No. CLVII. ON A METHOD OF STUDY, WRITTEN BY JOACHIMUS FORTIUS RINGELBERGIUS.

THERE is a little treatiſe on the method of ſtudy written by Ringelbergius, which, in the two laſt centuries, was a great favourite among ſcholars, and contributed much to animate their induſtry. The learned Erpenius acknowledges himſelf originally indebted to it for all his acquiſitions. He met with it at the age of ſixteen, and, in conſequence of its ſuggeſtions, though he was then totally averſe from a ſtudious life, and had made no proficiency in learning, yet he afterwards became a diſtinguiſhed ſcholar. The treatiſe had become ſcarce, and Erpenius generouſly printed a new edition, that others might partake of the benefit which he had himſelf enjoyed. He publiſhed it with the title of *Liber verè Aureus*, or the truly Golden Treatiſe.

In the epiſtle to the reader, which Erpenius has prefixed, he ſpeaks of the animating effect of the book, in terms ſo warm, and with ſo much gratitude, that a ſtudent would be wanting to himſelf not to gratify his curioſity, by giving it a peruſal. It is ſhort, and contains many paſſages which tend to encourage the ſcholar in his purſuits, and to inſpire him with an ardour and enthuſiaſm, like that ex-

cited in the soldier by the drum and trumpet, as he is marching on to battle. I believe there could not be found a better exhortation to study for the use of boys, if the good passages were not disgraced by others so ridiculous, as almost bring the writer under the imputation of lunacy. His literary enthusiasm had certainly transported him, in several instances, beyond the limits of his own reason.

I will select a few hints from the little tract, which may not only serve as a curious specimen to the English reader, but may rouse him from his indolence. The whole is, indeed, more valuable for the spirit and fire which it conduces to raise, than for its particular directions. It is rather exhortatory than didactic.

"How mean," says he, speaking of the scope at which students ought to aim, "how timid, how abject, must be "that spirit which can sit down contented with mediocri-"ty! As for myself, all that is within me is on fire. I had "rather," he proceeds in his strong manner, "be torn in "a thousand pieces, than relax my resolution of reaching "the sublimest heights of virtue and knowledge. I am of "opinion, that nothing is so arduous, nothing so admira-"ble in human affairs, which may not be obtained by the "industry of man. We are descended from heaven; thi-"ther let us go, whence we derived our origin. Let no-"thing satisfy us lower than the summit of all excellence. "This summit then," says he, "I point out as the pro-"per scope of the student."

"But labour must be beloved, and the pleasures of lux-"ury despised. Shall we submit to be extinguished for "ever without honour, without remembrance, *androdes* "*ouden epidedegmenoi*, without having done any thing like "men?" The whole of this chapter is written in a very uncommon style of literary enthusiasm, and I think it can hardly fail of inflaming a youthful imagination. If such ideas were early infixed in the bosom of an ingenious and ingenuous boy, what improvement in virtue, and in all useful qualities, might not be expected?

"That we must never despair," is the title of his third chapter. "If in our ascent we should fall head-long a thousand times, we must begin to climb again every time

" more ardently, and fly to the ſummit with recruited vi-
" gour! Let no one be dejected if he is not conſcious of
" any great advancement at firſt. The merchant thinks
" himſelf happy if, after a ten years voyage, after a thou-
" ſand dangers, he at laſt improves his fortune; and ſhall
" we, like poor-ſpirited creatures, give up all hopes after
" the firſt onſet? *Quodcunque imperavit animus obtinuit.*
" Whatever the mind has commanded itſelf to do, it has
" obtained its purpoſe.

" Riches muſt have no charms, compared to the charms
" of literature. Poverty is favourable to the ſucceſs of all
" literary purſuits. I mean not to throw contempt on mo-
" ney in general, but on that exorbitant wealth which al-
" lures the mind from ſtudy. But your parents" ſays he,
" will rather chuſe that you ſhould be guilty of purjury or
" murder, than not know how to value money.

" The ſtudent muſt be deſirous of praiſe. It is a pro-
" miſing preſage of ſucceſs to be rouſed by praiſe when
" one ſhall have done well, and to be grieved and incited
" to higher aims, on finding himſelf blamed or outdone by
" another. He who aſpires at the ſummit muſt be paſ-
" ſionately fond of glory.

" Thus have the firſt qualities, indiſpenſably requiſite in
" a youth devoted to ſtudy, been mentioned. He muſt
" aim at the higheſt points, he muſt love labour, he muſt
" never deſpair, he muſt deſpiſe riches, he muſt be greedy
" of praiſe. It remains that we preſcribe the methods.
" There are then three gradations in the modes of ſtudy;
" hearing, teaching, writing. It is a good and eaſy method
" to hear, it is a better and eaſier to teach, and the beſt
" and eaſieſt of all to write. Lectures are dull; becauſe
" it is tedious to confine the liberty of thought to the
" voice of the reader. But when we teach or write, the
" very exerciſe itſelf precludes the tædium."

Though the treatiſe of Ringelbergius is ſhort, yet to make an uſeful abbreviation of it, would require more room than the limits I uſually preſcribe to my papers will allow. I mean only to give a little ſpecimen of the manner in which this very extraordinary writer has compoſed his once celebrated treatiſe. There are certainly many things in it

which can ſcarcely fail to ſtimulate an honeſt mind, ſincerely and ſeriouſly devoted to letters. A ſevere critic, or a lover of ridicule, will find much, both in the matter and the ſtyle, to cenſure and deride. But ſtill there is ſomething ſo honeſt and ſo warm in this writer, that a good-natured mind cannot help being entertained even with his abſurdities, and inclined to overlook them amidſt the greater abundance of valuable advice. I believe the copies are not very ſcarce, and earneſtly recommend, both to the young ſtudent and the lover of literary curioſities, to devote half an hour to the peruſal of it, if it ſhould fall into their hands.

Ringelbergius was a very ingenious man, not only in polite learning and in the ſciences, but in the arts of mechanical writing, painting, and engraving. Indeed theſe were his firſt purſuits and employments, and he did not apply himſelf to learning Latin till his ſeventeenth year; but ſuch was the force of his genius, that he then made a rapid proficiency. He was certainly a man of genius, and though not quite correct in his language, yet he wrote Latin with much more ſpirit and vivacity than moſt of the Dutch and German writers of his age. He acquired the Greek language, and could almoſt repeat Homer from beginning to end. He was well verſed in various ſciences, and wrote ingeniouſly upon them; but his tracts are, I believe, more curious than uſeful. He would have been an excellent writer and profound philoſopher, had he lived in an age when the follies of judicial aſtrology were exploded, and hypotheſis reduced to the teſt of experiment.

No. CLVIII. ON THE FOLLY OF SACRIFICING COMFORT TO TASTE.

THERE are certainly homely, but ſweet comforts and conveniencies, the abſence of which no elegance can ſupply. Since, however, they have nothing of external ſplendour, they are often ſacraficed to the gratification of vanity. We live too much in the eyes and minds of others, and too little to our own hearts, too little to our own con-

ſciences, and too little to our own ſatisfaction. We are more anxious to appear, than to be, happy.

According to the preſent modes of living, and ideas of propriety, an oſtentatious appearance muſt be at all events, and in all inſtances, ſupported. If we can preſerve a glittering and gloſſy varniſh, we diſregard the interior materials and ſubſtance. Many ſhew a diſpoſition in every part of their conduct, ſimilar to that of the Frenchman, who had rather go without a ſhirt, than without ruffles; rather ſtarve as a count, than enjoy affluence and independence as an honeſt merchant. Men idolize the great, and the diſtinctions of faſhionable life, with an idolatry ſo reverential and complete, that they ſeem to miſtake it for their duty towards God. For, to uſe the words of the Catechiſm, "do they "not appear to believe in them, to fear them, to love them "with all their hearts, with all their minds, with all their "ſouls, and with all their ſtrength; to worſhip them, to "give them thanks, to put their whole truſt in them, to "call upon them, to honour their names and their words, "and to ſerve them truly all the days of their lives?" As they worſhip falſe gods, their bleſſings are of the kind which correſponds with the nature of their deities. They are all ſhadowy and unſubſtantial; dreams, bubbles, and meteors, which dance before their eyes, and often lead them to perdition.

It is really lamentable to behold families of a competent fortune, and reſpectable rank, who (while they deny themſelves even the common pleaſures of a plentiful table; while their kitchen is the cave of cold and famine; while their neighbours, relations, and friends pity and deſpiſe, as they paſs, the comfortleſs and unhoſpitable door) ſcruple not to be profuſely expenſive in dreſs, furniture, building, equipage, at public entertainments, in excurſions to Bath, Tunbridge, or Brighthelmſtone. To feed the faſhionable extravagance, they rob themſelves of indulgences which they know to be more truly ſatisfactory; for which of them returneth from the midnight aſſembly, or from the ſummer excurſions, without complaining of dulneſs, fatigue, ennui, and inſipidity? They have ſhewn themſelves, they have ſeen many fine perſons, and many fine things; but have they felt

the delicious pleasures of domestic peace, the tranquil delights of social intercourse at their own towns and villages, the solid satisfactions of a cool collected mind, the comforts arising from a disembarrassed state of finances, and the love and respect of a neighbourhood?

To run in debt, and be involved in danger of arrests and imprisonment, are, in this age, almost the objects of fashionable ambition. To have an execution in the house, is to be in the same predicament with this baronet and the other lord, or with his grace the duke. The poor imitator of splendid misery, little greatness, and titled infamy, risques his liberty and last shilling to become a man of taste and fashion. He boasts that he is a happy man, for he is a man of pleasure; he knows how to enjoy life; he professes the important science called the *scavoir vivre*. Give him the distinction which, in the littleness and blindness of his soul, he considers as the source of happiness and honour. Allow him his claim to taste, allow him the title of a man of pleasure, and since he insists upon it, allow him his pretensions to *scavoir vivre*. But at the same time he cannot deny that he is haunted by his creditors, that he is obliged to hide himself, lest he should lose his liberty; that he is eating the bread and the meat, and wearing the clothes of those whose children are crying for a morsel, and shivering in rags. If he has brought himself to such a state, as to feel no uneasiness when he recollects on his embarrassment, and its consequences to others; he is a base, worthless, and degenerate wretch. But if he is uneasy, where is his happiness? where his exalted enjoyments? how much happier had been this boaster of happiness, had he lived within the limits of reason, duty, and his fortune, in love and unity with his own regular family, at his own fire-side, beloved, trusted, respected in the neighbourhood, afraid of no creditor or prosecution, nor of any thing else, but of doing wrong? He might not indeed have made a figure on the turf; he might not have had the honour of leading the fashion; but he would probably have had health, wealth, fame, and peace. Many a man who is seldom seen, and never heard of, enjoys, in the silence and security of a private life, all which this unbluna-

ry ſtate can afford to ſweeten the cup, and to lighten the burthen.

In things of an inferior nature, and ſuch as are not immediately connected with moral [illegible], the ſame preſpection for external appearance, and the ſame neglect of ſolid comfort, when placed in competition with the [illegible] affected taſte, are found to prevail. Our houſes are often rendered cold, ſmall, and incommodious, for the ſake of preſerving a regularity of external figure, or of copying the architecture of a warmer climate. Our carriages are made dangerous or incommodious, for the ſake of attracting the paſſenger's eye, by ſomething new or ſingular in their ſhape, height, or fabric. Our dreſs is fashioned in uneaſy forms, and with troubleſome ſuperfluities, or uncomfortable defects, juſt as the Proteus, Fashion, iſſues out the capricious edicts of a variable taſte. We even eat and drink, ſee and hear, not according to our own appetites and ſenſes, but as the prevalent taſte happens to direct. In this refined age we are all perſons of taſte, from the hair dreſſer and milliner, to the duke and ducheſs. The queſtion is not what is right, prudent, pleaſing, comfortable, but what is the taſte. Hence beggarly finery and lordly beggary.

The ſacrifice of comfort to taſte is viſible in our modern gardens. I rejoice in the exploſion of the Dutch manner. I expatiate with raptured eye and [illegible] over the noble ſcenes created by a Kent and a Brown. But at the ſame time I lament that our cold climate often renders the ſublime and magnificent taſte in gardening incompatible with comfort. Winter, as the poet ſays, often [illegible] in the lap of May. How pleaſing to ſtep out of the houſe, and baſk under a ſunny wall covered with bloom, to watch the expanſion of a roſe-bud, and to ſee even the [illegible] pea and bean ſhooting up with all the vigour of verſal fertility! But now the manſion-houſe ſtands naked and forlorn. You deſcend from the flight of ſteps. You are ſaluted by the rudeſt breath of Eurus and Boreas. No trees, no walls, no out-houſes, even the kitchen and offices ſubſtantaneous. Not a corner to ſeek the genial warmth of a meridian ſun. Fine proſpects indeed all around. But you cannot ſtay to look at them. You fly to your chimney corner, happy if the per-

fecuting that purfues you not to your laſt receſs. We allow all the cradle can claim. We admire and love her beauties; but they are dearly bought at the expence of comfort.

A little and well laid garden adds greatly to the real enjoyment of a rural retreat. Though taſte has thrown down the walls, and laid all open, I venture to predict that before the lapſe of half a century, good ſenſe and the love of comfort will rebuild them. The grounds beyond may ſtill be laid out in the grandeſt and moſt beautiful ſtyle; but let the houſe ſtand in the midſt of a little cultivated ſpot, where every tender beauty and delicacy may be diſplayed, and where the rigours of our inclement clime may be ſoftened with the ſweeteſt enjoyments. The contraſt between this, which I would call the domeſtic, and the other, which might be named the outer garden, or the grove, would produce an effect by no means unpleaſing. They who have no taſte for flowers, and the thouſand beauties of an enclоſed garden, have little pretenſion to judgment in the graces of horticulture.

Indeed, ſuch is the nature of man, we commonly advance improvement to the verge of impropriety. We now loath the idea of a ſtraight line, and a regular row of trees. But let us not, in the pride of our hearts, flatter ourſelves with the unerring rectitude of our taſte. Many of the ancients who poſſeſſed the beſt taſte, not only in poetry and eloquence, but in arts, in painting, ſculpture, architecture, were great admirers of plantations perfectly regular, and laid out in quincunxes. However vanity and faſhion may dictate and declaim, the world will not always believe that Homer, Virgil, Cyrus, Cicero, Bacon, and Temple, were totally miſtaken in their ideas of horticultural beauty.

Cicero informs us, in a fine quotation from Xenophon's œconomics, that when Lyſander came to Cyrus, a prince equally diſtinguiſhed for his glorious empire and his genius, Cyrus ſhewed him a piece of ground *well enclоſed and completely planted*. After the viſitor had admired the tall and ſtraight trees, and the rows regularly formed in a quincunx, and the ground clear of weeds, and well cultivated, and the ſweetneſs of the odours which exhaled from the flowers, he

could not help expreſſing his admiration not only of the diligence, but the ſkill of him by whom all this was meaſured and marked out; upon which Cyrus anſwered, "It was "myſelf who *meaſured* every thing, the *rows* of trees are of "my diſpoſing, the plan is mine, and many of the trees were "planted with my own hand." An illuſtrious pattern, which I hope our Engliſh noblemen and gentlemen will not be afraid to follow. Why always employ a profeſſed plan-maker? Why ſacrifice their own amuſement and inclination to the will of another, and to the imperious edicts of capricious faſhion?

No. CLIX. ON THE EXAMPLE OF HENRY THE FIFTH, AND THE BAD EFFECTS OF AN OPINION, THAT A PROFLIGATE YOUTH IS LIKELY TO TERMINATE IN A WISE MANHOOD.

THERE are thoſe who conſider early profligacy as a mark of that ſpirit, which ſeldom fails to produce, in the ſubſequent periods of life, a wiſe and virtuous character. The example of Henry the fifth is often cited in confirmation of their opinion. Shakeſpeare has indeed repreſented his errors and reformation in ſo amiable a light, that many are not diſpleaſed when they ſee a young man beginning his career in riot and debauchery. While there is an appearance of ſpirit, they regard not the vice.

The example of Henry the fifth has been applied particularly to heirs apparent to the crown. If the future king is found to be early initiated in the exceſſes of ſenſuality, it is a favourable preſage, and we are referred to the example of Falſtaff's Hal. If he devote his time to drinking, and be actually involved in continual intoxication, it is all the better, for do we not recollect Hal's exploits at the Boar's Head in Eaſtcheap? Dame Quickly, Doll Tearſheet, are illuſtrious inſtances to prove what company a prince ſhould keep in order to become hereafter a great king. It is in the haunts of intemperance and vice, and in the company of ſycophants and knaves, that he is, according

to the vulgar phrase, to sow his wild oats, to spend the exuberance of his spirit, to subdue the ebullition of his blood, and to acquire a valuable species of moral experience.

It is true, indeed, that Henry the fifth is a remarkable instance of early profligacy and subsequent reformation. He is a remarkable, because he is a rare instance. For one who succeeds as he did, a thousand become either incurable debauchees, drunkards, and rogues, ruin their character and fortunes, or die under the operation of so rough an experiment. We hear not of those who are obliged to go to sea, to hide themselves on the continent, to skulk in the garrets of blind alleys, to spend their days in gaols, or are early carried to the church-yard, amidst the thanks and rejoicings of their friends for so happy a deliverance from shame and ruin. But if one wild youth becomes but a tolerably good man, we are struck with the metamorphosis, as we are with every thing uncommon. We exaggerate his goodness, by comparing it with his previous depravity. We cite the example, as a consolatary topic, wherever we behold a young man, as the scripture beautifully expresses it, walking in the ways of his own heart, and in the sight of his own eyes. We talk as if we almost congratulated a parent, when a son has spirit enough to violate, not only the rules of decency, but also the most sacred laws of morality and religion.

Such fatal ideas have broken the heart of many a virtuous and feeling father. They have brought his hairs, before they were grey, to the grave. I have been much pleased with a passage in the sermons of the late worthy Dr. Ogden, in which he recommends regularity and virtue to young men solely for the sake of their parents. "Stop, "young man," says he, "stop a little to look towards "thy poor parents. Think it not too much to bestow a "moment's reflection on those who never forget thee. Re-"collect what they have done for thee. Remember all— "all indeed thou canst not; alas! ill had been thy lot, "had not their care begun, before thou couldst remember "or know any thing.

"Now so proud, self-willed, inexorable, then couldst "thou only ask by wailing, and move them with thy tears.

" And they were moved. Their hearts were touched with " thy diſtreſs ; they relieved and watched thy wants before " thou kneweſt thine own neceſſities, or their kindneſs. " They clothed thee ; thou kneweſt not that thou waſt " naked : thou aſkedſt not for bread ; but they fed thee. " And ever ſince—for the particulars are too many to be " recounted, and too many ſurely to be all utterly forgot- " ten, it has been the very principal endeavour, employ- " ment, and ſtudy of their lives to do ſervice unto thee. If " by all theſe endeavours, they can obtain their child's com- " fort, they arrive at the full accompliſhment of their wiſh- " es. They have no higher object of their ambition. Be " thou but happy, and they are ſo.

" And now tell me, is not ſomething to be done, I do " not now ſay for thyſelf, but for them ? If it be too " much to deſire of thee to be good, and wiſe, and virtu- " ous, and happy for thy own ſake ; yet be happy for " theirs. Think that a ſober, upright, and, let me add, re- " ligious life, beſides the bleſſings it will bring upon thy " own head, will be a fountain of unfeigned comfort to thy " declining parents, and make the heart of the aged ſing for " joy.

" What ſhall we ſay ? which of theſe is happier ? the " ſon that maketh a glad father ? or the father, bleſſed with " ſuch a ſon ?

" Fortunate young man ! who haſt an heart open ſo " early to virtuous delights, and canſt find thy own hap- " pineſs in returning thy father's bleſſing upon his own " head !

" And happy father ! whoſe years have been prolonged, " not, as it often happens, to ſee his comforts fall from " him, one after another, and to become at once old and " deſtitute ; but to taſte a new pleaſure, not to be found " among the pleaſures of youth, reſerved for his age ; to " reap the harveſt of all his cares and labours, in the duty, " affection, and felicity of his dear child. His very look " beſpeaks the inward ſatisfaction of his heart. The infir- " mities of his age ſit light on him. He feels not the " troubles of life : he ſmiles at the approach of death : ſees " himſelf ſtill living and honoured in the memory and the

" perſon of his ſon, his other dearer ſelf; and paſſes down " to the receptacle of all the living, in the fullneſs of con- " tent and joy.

" How unlike to this is the condition of him, who has " the affliction to be the father of a wicked offspring! Poor, " unhappy man! no ſorrow is like unto thy ſorrow. Diſ- " eaſes and death are bleſſings, if compared with the an- " guiſh of thy heart, when thou ſeeſt thy dear children run " heedleſsly and head-long in the ways of ſin, forgetful of " their parents counſel, and their own happineſs. Unfor- " tunate old man! How often does he wiſh he had never " been born, or had been cut off before he was a father! " No reflection is able to afford him conſolation. He grows " old betimes; and the afflictions of age are doubled on his " head. In vain are inſtruments of pleaſure brought forth. " His ſoul refuſes comfort. Every bleſſing of life is loſt " upon him. No ſucceſs is able to give him joy. His " triumphs are like that of David; while his friends, cap- " tains, ſoldiers were rending the air with ſhouts of victory " —he, poor conqueror, went up, as it is written, to the " chamber over the gate and wept: and as he went, thus " he ſaid; O, my ſon Abſalom! my ſon, my ſon Abſa- " lom! would to God I had died for thee! O Abſalom, " my ſon, my ſon!"

I have introduced this paſſage, with a hope that gay and thoughtleſs young men may be properly affected by it; and though they ſhould have no regard for themſelves, that they ſhould be led to have pity on their poor parents, and to chuſe the right way, that they may not cauſe affliction to him who has often dandled them in his arms, nor to her at whoſe breaſt they hung in the ſweet and inocent period of of their infancy. It is indeed a melancholy conſideration that many children, who have been the delight of their parents during the earlier ages, no ſooner arrive at maturity, than they prove a ſcourge and a curſe. They hurry thoſe out of the world, who brought them into it. They embitter the old age of thoſe who devoted the health and ſtrength of manhood to their welfare and ſupport. Sad return! to plant the pillow of declining age with thorns!—O have pity, have pity on your father—behold him with tottering

ſtep approaching you! With ſuppliant hands, and tears in his eyes, he begs you—to do what? to be good and happy. O ſpare him, wipe away his tears: make him happy, be ſo yourſelf,—ſo when it ſhall be your turn to be a father, may you never feel the pangs you have already inflicted!

There are parents, indeed, who ſeem to have little concern but for the pecuniary intereſt or worldly advancement of their children. While their children excel in dreſs, addreſs, ſimulation, and diſſimulation, they are allowed to be as debauched and immoral as they pleaſe. While they poſſeſs a poor, mean, and contemptible kind of wiſdom, commonly called the knowledge of the world, their parents are perfectly eaſy; though they ſhould be notoriouſly guilty of every baſe artifice, and plunged in the groſſeſt and moſt unlawful ſpecies of ſenſuality. That poor man, lord Cheſterfield, was one of thoſe parents who are ready to ſacrifice their children's honour, conſcience, and ſalvation, for the ſake of gaining a little of the little honours and riches of a world, where not even the higheſt honours or the moſt abundant riches are comparable to the poſſeſſion of an honeſt heart. That wretched lord ſeems to have entertained very little natural affection for his ſpurious offſpring. His paternal attention was all avarice and ambition. He would probably have been delighted if his ſon had been at an early age a remarkable debauchee. He would have thought the ſpirit which vice diſplayed, a ſure prognoſtic of future eminence. Providence defeated his purpoſe, and permitted his letters to be exhibited as a lothſome monument of wickedneſs, vanity, and worldly wiſdom. Such wiſdom is indeed uſually folly, even where its effects and conſequences are confined to the preſent period of exiſtence.

Every father then, and every mother who deſerve that tender and venerable appellation, will ſtrenuouſly endeavour, whatever have been their own errors and vices, to preſerve thoſe whom they have introduced into a troubleſome world from the foul contagion and pollution of vice. If they have any regard for their children, for their country, for themſelves, they will uſe every probable means to reſcue the riſing generation from early profligacy. Selfiſh motives

often prevail when all others are inefficacious. I repeat then, that, for their own sakes, they must guard their offspring from riot, intemperance, and prodigality. If they are misguided by the example of Henry the fifth, or any other reformed rake, so as to encourage their children in evil, or even to be negligent of them, they will probably repent in the day of old age, and find, poverty, shame, and anguish, superadded to the weight of years, and the unavoidable evils of a natural decay.

No. CLX. A GOOD HEART NECESSARY TO ENJOY THE BEAUTIES OF NATURE.

BY a just dispensation of Providence, it happens that they who are unreasonably selfish, seldom enjoy so much happiness as the generous and contented. Almost all the wicked deviate from the line of rectitude, that they may engross an extraordinary portion of some real or imaginary advantage. Their hearts are agitated in the pursuit of it with the most violent and painful emotions; and their eagerness, apprehensions, and solicitude, poison the enjoyment after they have obtained the possession. The nature of their pleasures is at best gross, sensual, violent, and transitory. They are always dissatisfied, always envious, always malignant. Their souls are bent down to the earth, and destitute of all elevated and heavenly ideas, *cœlestium inanes*. They have not powers of perception for the sublime or refined satisfactions; and are no less insensible to the tranquil delights of innocence and simplicity, than the deaf and blind to the beauty of colours and the melody of music.

To the wicked, and indeed to all who are warmly engaged in the vulgar pursuits of the world, the contemplation of rural scenes, and of the manners and nature of animals, is perfectly insipid. The odour of flowers, the purling of streams, the song and plumage of birds, the sportive innocence of the lamb, the fidelity of the dog, are incapable of attracting, for one moment, the notice of him whose con-

ſcience is uneaſy, and paſſions unſubdued. Invite him to a morning walk through a neighbouring wood, and he begs to be excuſed; for he loves his pillow, and can ſee no charms in trees. Endeavour to allure him, on a vernal evening, when, after a ſhower, every leaf breaſtes fragrance and freſhneſs, to ſaunter with you in the garden; and he pleads an engagement at whiſt or at the bottle. Bid him liſten to the thruſh, the blackbird, the nightingale, the wood-lark, and he interrupts you by aſking the price of ſtocks, and enquiring whether the Weſt India fleet is arrived. As you walk over the meadows enamelled with cowſlips and daiſies, he takes no other notice, but enquires who is the owner, how much the land lets for an acre, what hay ſold for at the laſt market. He prefers the gloomieſt day in November, on which pecuniary buſineſs is tranſacted, or a feaſt celebrated, or a public diverſion afforded, to all the delights of the merry month of May. He who is conſtantly engaged in gratifying his luſt, or in gaming, becomes in a ſhort time ſo very wiſe, as to conſider the ſtudy of the works of God in the creation, and the external beauty both of vegetable and animated nature, as little ſuperior to a childiſh entertainment. How grave his aſpect! No Solon ever looked ſo ſapient as he does, when he is on the point of making a bet, or inſidiouſly plotting an intrigue. One might conclude, from his air of importance, that man was born to ſhake the dice, to ſhuffle the cards, to drink claret, and to deſtroy, by debauchery, the innocence of individuals, and the peace of families. Ignorant and miſtaken wretch! He knows not, that purity and ſimplicity of heart would furniſh him with delights, which, while they render his life tranquil and pleaſurable, would enable him to reſign his ſoul at death into the hands of his Maker unpolluted. What ſtains and filth it uſually contracts by an indiſcriminate commerce with the world! how comparatively pure amidſt the genuine pleaſures of a rural and philoſophical life!

As a preſervative of innocence, and as the means of a moſt agreeable paſtime, the love of birds, flowers, plants, trees, gardens, animals, when it appears in boys, as indeed it uſually does, ſhould be encouraged, and in a ſubordinate degree cultivated. Farewel innocence, when ſuch things

ceaſe to be capable of affording pleaſure! The heart gradually becomes hardened and corrupted, when its objects are changed to thoſe of a worldly and a ſenſual nature.

Man may indeed be amuſed in the days of health and vigour with the common purſuits of ordinary life; but they have too much agitation in them for the feeble powers of old age. Amuſements are then required which are gentle, yet healthy; capable of engaging the thoughts, yet requiring no painful or continued exertion. Happy he who has acquired and preſerved to that age a taſte for ſimple pleaſures. A fine day, a beautiful garden, a flowery field, are to him enjoyments ſimilar in ſpecies and degree to the bliſs of Elyſium. A farm yard, with all its inhabitants, conſtitutes a moſt delightful ſcene, and furniſhes him with a thouſand entertaining ideas. The man who can ſee without pleaſure a hen gather her chickens under her wing, or the train of ducklings following their parent into a pond, is like him who has no muſic in his ſoul, and who, according to Shakeſpeare, is fit for treaſons, murders, every thing that can diſgrace and degrade humanity. *Vetabo iiſdem ſub trabibus, fragilemque mecum ſolvat phaſelum.* I will forbid him, ſays Horace on another occaſion, to be under the ſame roof with me, or to embark in the ſame veſſel.

Let it operate as an additional motive in ſtimulating us to preſerve our innocence, that with our innocence we preſerve our ſenſibility to the charms of nature. It is indeed one of the rewards of innocence, that it is enabled to taſte the pureſt pleaſure which this world can beſtow, without the uſual conſequences of pleaſures, remorſe and ſatiety. The man of a bad heart can find no delight but in bad deſigns and bad actions—nominal joys and real torments. His very amuſements are of neceſſity connected with the injury of others, and with a thouſand painful ſenſations which no language can expreſs. But the mind of the honeſt, ſimple, and ingenuous, is allways gay and enlivened, like ſome of the ſouthern climates, with a ſerenity almoſt perpetual. Let a man who would form an adequate idea on the different ſtates of the good and bad heart, with reſpect to happineſs, compare the climate of Otaheite with that of Terra del Fuego, as deſcribed by our Britiſh circumnavigators.

No. CLXI. ON THE PECULIAR BASENESS OF VICE IN NOBILITY.

MANY, who have been raiſed to titles and eſtates by the virtue or good fortune of their anceſtors, ſeem to conſider themſelves as privileged to infringe all the common reſtraints eſtabliſhed by a regard to decency, by moral philoſophy, by natural and by revealed religion. They have noble blood in their veins, therefore they preſume that the world was made for them to take their paſtime in it. Who, they exclaim (with a volley of oaths and execrations,) who ſhall dare to ſay to us, Thus far ſhall ye go, and no farther? Rules, laws, and *modes* of *ſuperſtition* were made for the canaille, for the muſhroom race, who ſprung from dunghills, and on whom the ſun of royalty has never ſhed its luſtre. Scarcely any of the ancient philoſophers could boaſt of this noble blood, and ſhall they preſume to dictate to a nobleman, that is, perhaps, to a baſtard of king Charles's ſtrumpet, or to the diſeaſed offspring of a leprous, ſcrophulous, ſorry race of puiſne lordlings, whoſe names are only recorded in the books of ruined tradeſmen, and whoſe illuſtrious exploits are limited to the regions of a cock-pit, a horſe-race, a tavern, and a bawdy-houſe? Shall a carpenter's ſon dictate to a duke? His lordſhip pleads his privileges. Let him riot in debauchery, ſeduce innocence, break the peace of private families, laugh at all that is ſacred and ſerious, for is he not a duke?

You are indeed a duke; or, in other words, your great grandfather, by good fortune or good deeds, acquired for you that noble old manſion-houſe, that park, thoſe woods, thoſe lands, thoſe titles, all of which you baſely diſhonour. Though in your appearance you have not much of ducal dignity, yet we ſee your ducal coronet on your proſtitute's vis-a-vis: we ſee you glorying in your ſhame, neglecting to pay your tradeſmen, yet laviſhing your gold on horſes and harlots; ſtooping to the meaneſt company and diverſions, yet retaining all the petty inſolence of family pride:

we see you meanly sneaking in a court; we see you rewarded, notwithstanding the infamy of your private life, with offices of trust and honour; we therefore acknowledge that you have all the common attributes and outward signs of the title which you happen to inherit. You have also had the honour of a divorce, and enjoy the envied and brilliant reputation of a professed adulterer. With a character and qualities so noble, every Briton must acknowledge how justly you are saluted by the appellation of your Grace! how justly you are made the companion of a prince, and the privy counsellor of the king of Great Britain, France and Ireland, *defender of the faith*, and over all causes, *ecclesiastical* as well as civil, supreme! But, irony apart, who can be surprised, or who can lament, when such wretches as yourself are the counsellors of kings, that the subjects rebel, and that the empire is dismembered? Under a ruler like you, who would not glory in the illustrious character and conduct of a Washington?

When we read the list of dukes, marquises, earls, viscounts, barons, and baronets, exhibited in the Court Calendar, we cannot help wondering at the great number of those who are sunk in obscurity, or branded with infamy; and at the extreme paucity of characters to which may be applied with justice the epithets of decent, virtuous, learned, and devout. Here we see a long list of titled shadows, whose names are seldom heard, and whose persons are seldom seen but at Newmarket and the chocolate-house. There we mark a tribe whom fame has celebrated for those feats of gallantry called, in an old fashioned book, adultery. Here we point out a wretch stigmatized for unnatural crimes, there a blood-thirsty duellist. Debauchees, drunkards, spendthrifts, gamesters, tyrannical neighbours, and bad masters of families, occur to the mind of the reader so frequently, that they almost cease by familiarity to excite his animadversion. All this may be true, it will be said; but will it not be true of any other equal number of men? I venture to affirm that it will not. The power, the rank, and opulence of the nobility, added to bad company and often to a bad education, lead them beyond the line of common depravity. There is this also which distinguishes their errors from the usual

errors of human infirmity; they often boaſt of their enormities, and glory in their diſgrace; exorbitant profligacy is conſidered as a mark of manly ſpirit; and all who are decent and regular, are ridiculed by the majority as tame, puſillanimous, hypocritical, ſuperſtitious, methodiſtical, prejudiced, or narrow-minded.

But allowing, what experience refutes, that the enormities of the nominal great are not worſe than thoſe of others, yet it cannot be denied that their influence on the community is infinitely more detrimental. The greater part of mankind are weak and ill-educated; but to a feeble and ill-formed underſtanding, riches and titles appear to be the nobleſt diſtinctions of human nature. Whatever is ſaid or done by the poſſeſſors of them, operates both as precept and example with irreſiſtible force. It is ſufficient, in the opinion of many a ſilly man and woman of faſhion, to juſtify any eccentricity of behaviour, that a lord or a lady, whom they proudly name among their acquaintance, has ſet the example. Deformity itſelf, awkwardneſs, rudeneſs, become grace and politeneſs, when exhibited by ſome ducheſs who affects fame by an impudent ſingularity. The court in Doctors-Commons exhibits frequent proofs, in the preſent times, that vices, directly repugnant to the law of God, pregnant with injuries to ſociety, and fatal to private virtue and private happineſs, are become faſhionable. It is a pride and pleaſure among the blaſted lordlings of the day, to ſtand forth in a court of juſtice, and avow themſelves the deſtroyers of female virtue and nuptial felicity. They are travelled men; and, like true patriots, emulating the manners of that nation which is endeavouring to deſtroy our political exiſtence, they attempt to introduce the looſe principles of conjugal libertiniſm into their own country. Thoſe who have not travelled, imitate the noble youths who have; and thus is the ſweet cup of domeſtic felicity almoſt univerſally embittered among thoſe who, in the regions of faſhion, pretend to ſuperior ſkill in the art of enjoying life.

No. CLXII. ON AFFECTATION OF EXTREME DELICACY AND SENSIBILITY.

EXTREME delicacy ſo eſteemed at preſent, ſeems to have been unknown in times of remote antiquity. It is certainly a great refinement on human nature; and refinements are never attended to in the earlier ages, when the occupations of war, and the wants of unimproved life, leave little opportunity, and leſs inclination, for fanciful enjoyments. Danger and diſtreſs require ſtrength of mind, and neceſſarily exclude an attention to thoſe delicacies, which, while they pleaſe, infallibly enervate.

That tenderneſs which is amiable in a ſtate of perfect civilization, is deſpiſed as a weakneſs among unpoliſhed nations. Shocked at the ſmalleſt circumſtances which are diſagreeable, it cannot ſupport the idea of danger and alarm. So far from exerciſing the ſeverities which are ſometimes politically neceſſary in a rude ſtate, it ſtarts with horror from the ſight, and at the deſcription of them. It delights in the calm occupations of rural life, and would gladly reſign the ſpear and the ſhield for the ſhepherd's crook and the lover's garland. But in an unformed community, where conſtant danger requires conſtant defence, thoſe diſpoſitions which delight in eaſe and retirement will be treated with general contempt; and no temper of mind which is deſpiſed will be long epidemical.

The ancient Greeks and Romans were the moſt civilized people on the earth. They, however, were unacquainted with that extreme delicacy of ſentiment which is become univerſally prevalent in modern times. Perhaps ſome reaſonable cauſes may be aſſigned. The ſtoic philoſophy endeavoured to introduce a total apathy, and though it was not embraced in all its rigour by the vulgar, yet it had a ſufficient number of votaries to diffuſe a general inſenſibility of temper. It perhaps originally meant no more than to teach men to govern their affections by the dictates of reaſon; but as a natural want of feeling produced the ſame

effects as a rational regulation of the passions, insensibility soon passed among the vulgar, for what it had no claim to, a philosophical indifference.

That respectful attention to women, which in modern times is called gallantry, was not to be found among the ancients. Women were unjustly considered as inferior beings, whose only duty was to contribute to pleasure, and to superintend domestic œconomy. It was not till the days of chivalry that men shewed that desire of pleasing the softer sex, which seems to allow them a superiority. This deference to women refines the manners and softens the temper; and it is no wonder that the ancients who admitted not women to their social conversations, should acquire a roughness of manners incompatible with delicacy of sentiment.

Men who acted, thought, and spoke, like the ancients, were unquestionably furnished by nature with every feeling in great perfection. But their mode of education contributed rather to harden than to molify their hearts. Politics and war were the only general objects of pursuit. Ambition, it is well known, renders all other passions subservient to itself; and the youth who had been accustomed to a military discipline, and had endured the hardships of a campaign, though he might yield to the allurements of pleasure, would not have time to cultivate the refinements of delicacy. But the modern soldier, in the present mode of conducting war, is not compelled to undergo many personal hardships either in the preparation for his profession, or in the exercise of it. Commerce, but little known to many ancient nations, gives the moderns an opportunity of acquiring opulence without much difficulty or danger; and the infinite numbers who inherit this opulence, have recourse, in order to pass away life with ease, to the various arts of exciting pleasure. The professions of divinity and law, leave sufficient time, opportunity, and inclination to most of their professors to pursue every innocent amusement and gratification. The general plan of modern education, which, among the liberal, consists of the study of poets and sentimental writers, contributes, perhaps, more than all other causes, to humanize the heart and refine the sentiments: for, at the period when education is commenced, the heart is most susceptible of impressions.

Whatever disposition tends to soften, without weakening the mind, must be cherished; and it must be allowed that an unaffected delicacy of sentiment, on this side the extreme, adds greatly to the happiness of mankind, by diffusing an universal benevolence. It teaches men to feel for others as for themselves; it disposes them to rejoice with the happy, and, by partaking, to encrease their pleasure. It frequently excludes the malignant passions, which are the sources of the greatest misery in life. It excites a pleasing sensation in our own breast, which, if its duration be considered, may be placed among the highest gratifications of sense. The only ill consequence that can be apprehended from it is, an effeminacy of mind, which may disqualify us for vigorous pursuits and manly exertions.

In the most successful course of things, obstacles will impede, and disagreeable circumstances disgust. To bear these without feeling them, is sometimes necessary in the right conduct of life; but he who is tremblingly alive all over, and whose sensibility approaches to soreness, avoids the contest in which he knows he must be hurt. He feels injuries never committed, and resents affronts never intended. Disgusted with men and manners, he either seeks retirement to indulge his melancholy, or, weakened by continual chagrin, conducts himself with folly and imprudence.

How then shall we avoid the extreme of a disposition, which in the due medium, is productive of the most salutary consequences? In this excess, as well as all others, reason must be called in to moderate. Sensibility must not be permitted to sink us into such a state of indolence, as effectually represses those manly sentiments, which may very well consist with the most delicate. The greatest mildness is commonly united with the greatest fortitude, in the true hero. Tenderness joined with resolution, forms indeed a finished character, to which reason, co-operating with nature, may easily attain.

The affectation of great sensibility is extremely common. It is however as odious as the reality is amiable. It renders a man detestable, and a woman ridiculous. Instead of relieving the afflicted, which is the necessary effect of genuine sympathy, a character of this sort flies from misery, to

ſhew that it is too delicate to ſupport the ſight of diſtreſs. The appearance of a toad, or the jolting of a carriage, will cauſe a paroxyſm of fear. It pretends to a ſuperior ſhare of refinement and philanthropy. But it is remarkable, that this delicacy and tenderneſs often diſappear in ſolitude, and the pretender to uncommon ſenſibility is frequently found, in the abſence of witneſſes, to be uncommonly unfeeling.

To have received a tender heart from the hand of nature, is to have received the means of the higheſt enjoyment. To have regulated its emotions by the dictates of reaſon, is to have acted up to the dignity of man, and to have obtained that happineſs of which the heart was conſtituted ſuſceptible. May a temper, thus laudable in itſelf, never be rendered contemptible by affectation, or injurious to its poſſeſſor and to others, through the want of a proper guidance!

No. CLXIII. ON TRUE PATIENCE, AS DISTINGUISHED FROM INSENSIBILITY.

HOWEVER common and however intenſe the evils of human life may be, certain it is, that evils equally great do not affect all men with an equal degree of anguiſh; and the different manner of ſuſtaining evils, ariſes from one of theſe two cauſes, a natural inſenſibility, or an adventitious fortitude, acquired by the exertion of PATIENCE.

Apathus, when a ſchool-boy, was not remarkable for quickneſs of apprehenſion, or brilliancy of wit; but though his progreſs was ſlow, it was ſure, and the additional opportunities of ſtudy, which he enjoyed by freedom from thoſe avocations which vivacity and warmth of conſtitution occaſion, made him a tolerable good ſcholar. The ſullenneſs of his deportment, however, alienated the affections of his teachers; and, upon the ſlighteſt miſdemeanours, he often underwent the puniſhment of the rod, which he always bore without a tear, and without complaint.

He had not long been at school, before his father and mother died of a contagious fever. Preparatoty to the disclosure of so mournful an event to an orphan son, many precautions were taken, many, phrases of condolence studied. At length, the master took him aside, and after several observations on the instability of human affairs, the suddenness of death, the necessity of submission to Providence, and the inefficacy of sorrow, told him that his parents were no more. To this, young Apathus replied, by observing, without any visible alteration in his countenance, that he suspected something of that kind had happened, as he had not received his letters at the usual time; but that he had not said any thing on the subject, as he thought his being possessed of a fine fortune by the event, was a matter that concerned nobody but himself. "For (says he) as the death "was sudden, there probably was no will, and my father "being pretty warm, as they call it, and I being an only son, I think I shall be very well off." Here he was interrupted by his master, who was now desirous of some degree of that grief which he had been before solicitous to prevent.—"And are you not affected (said he) with the "loss of the dearest friends you have in the world?"—"Why, Sir (replied the insensible,) you have just now been "teaching me to submit to Providence, and telling me, "we must all die, and the like; and do I not practise "your precepts?" The master was too much astonished to be able to answer, and hastily left the young man; who probably concluded the day with a feast of gingerbread or a game at marbles.

Soon after he left school, he took it into his head to enter into the state of matrimony. But here let the gentle reader be informed, that he was not induced to submit his neck to the yoke by any of those fine feelings which constitute love. The object of his choice had ten thousand pounds; and he considered that ten thousand pounds would pay for the lady's board. When the little prattlers were arrived at that age when none can behold them without pleasure, they were seized with an unfavourable small-pox, and severally carried from the cradle to the grave. The constant attendance of the mother on this occasion, brought on a fever,

which, together with a weakneſs occaſioned by an advanced ſtate of pregnancy, proved fatal. Then, at laſt, Apathus was obſerved to fetch a ſigh, and lift up his hands to Heaven—at the ſight of the undertaker's bill. A thouſand misfortunes in buſineſs have fallen to his lot, all which he has borne with ſeeming fortitude. He is now, at length, reduced to that ſtate, in which genlemen chuſe to take lodgings within the purlieus of St. George's fields: but there is no alteration in his features; he ſtill ſings his ſong, takes his glaſs, and laughs at thoſe ſilly mortals who weary themſelves in wandering up and down the world without controul.

Thus Apathus affords a ſtriking inſtance of that power of bearing afflictions which ariſes from natural inſenſibility. Stoicus will give us a better idea of Patience as a virtue.

From that period at which the mind begins to think, Stoicus was remarkable for a quality, which, in children, is called ſhamefacedneſs. He could never enter a room full of company without ſhewing his diſtreſs, by a violent ſuffuſion of bluſhes. At ſchool, he avoided the commiſſion of faults, rather through fear of ſhame than of puniſhment. In ſhort, an exquiſite ſenſibility, at the ſame time that it gave him the moſt exalted delight, frequently expoſed him to the keeneſt affliction. Thus, from being acquainted with grief, though a ſtranger to misfortune, he acquired a habit of bearing evils before any heavy ones befel him.

Stoicus was deſigned for a literary life, which to the generality of mankind appears almoſt exempt from the common attacks of ill-fortune: but if there were no other inſtances of the peculiar miſeries of the ſtudent, Stoicus alone might evince the groundleſſneſs of ſuch an opinion. From a ſanguine temper, he was prone to anticipate ſucceſs; and from an enterpriſing diſpoſition, was little inclined to ſit down contented without a conſiderable ſhare of reputation. Influenced by his love of fame, he ventured to appeal to the public taſte, and actually ſent into the world a performance of great merit: but as the work wanted ſome popular attractions, it was ſoon neglected and ſunk into oblivion.

An evil of this kind, perhaps, the merchant or the manu-

facturer may treat with contempt. They however, who, with the same feelings, have been in the same predicament, will know the anguish which secretly tormented the disconsolate Stoicus. This disappointment was the first affliction of his life, and on this he long meditated without intermission. He has not again ventured to publish, and therefore has had no cause of uneasiness from the ingratitude of the many-headed monster: but the evils of his private life have been numerous and afflictive beyond conception. The death of an amiable wife, a constant state of sickness, expectations continually disappointed, have concurred to overwhelm him —but all their efforts have been fruitless. The reflections of philosophy and religion fortify him against every attack, and I never visite him without observing a placed smile of resignation diffused on his countenance. He is sensible of the real weight of every evil, and at the same time sustains it with alacrity. He draws resources from himself in every emergency, and with the nicest feelings is become perfectly callous.

This is genuine Patience, and though the former may by some be thought a happiness, the latter only can be esteemed a virtue.

Sensibility, with all its inconveniences, is to be cherished by those who understand and wish to maintain the dignity of their nature. To feel for others, dispose us to exercise the amiable virtue of charity, which our religion indispensably requires. It constitutes that enlarged benevolence which philosophy inculcates, and which is indeed comprehended in Christian charity. It is the privilege and the ornament of man; and the pain which it causes is abundantly recompensed by that sweet sensation which ever accompanies the exercise of beneficence.

To feel our own misery with full force, is not to be deprecated. Affliction softens and improves the heart. Tears, to speak in the style of figure, fertilize the soil in which the virtues grow. And it is the remark of one who understood human nature, that the faculties of the mind, as well as the feelings of the heart, are meliorated by adversity.

But, in order to promote these ends, our sufferings must not be permitted to overwhelm us. We must oppose them

with the arms of reaſon and religion; and to expreſs the idea in the language of the philoſopher, as well as the poet, of nature; every one, while he is compelled to feel his misfortunes like a man, ſhould reſolve alſo to bear them like a man.

No. CLXIV. CURSORY REMARKS ON THE ELOQUENCE OF THE PULPIT. IN A LETTER.

ELOQUENCE is numbered among thoſe arts which, inſtead of making a progreſſive improvement in the courſe of revolving ages, have greatly receded from their original excellence.

The funeral orations and panegyrics of a few Frenchmen, are the only pieces among the moderns which make pretenſions to rhetorical compoſition in the higheſt ſtyle. Theſe, however, appear very elaborate and unnatural; whether from the barrenneſs of the ſubjects, or from the weakneſs of the orators, is foreign to our purpoſe to determine. From whatever cauſe it proceeds, it appears that ancient eloquence is not reſtored by thoſe efforts which are allowed to have been moſt ſucceſsful.

In England, ſo generally is a taſte for ſolid argument and ſubtle reaſoning diffuſed, that mere flights of imagination, when unſupported by truth and argument, are little attended to. Thus it has been ſaid, we have no truly claſſical hiſtory of our own country. Elaborate collections of facts, proceedings of parliament, and accurate deſcriptions of our natives and armaments, fill up with a jejune detail, ſome of our moſt celebrated hiſtories. A great deal of ſagacity has, indeed, been exerted in the adjuſtment of conteſted æras, unwearied labour in illuſtrating obſcure paſſages in our annals, and much patience in the examination of our records. But where, after all, is the painting of a Livy, and the conciſe elegance of a Salluſt?

It is not therefore ſurpriſing, that a people who admit not unneceſſary embelliſhments in matters of taſte, and who can fall in love with naked truth even when ſhe is at

liberty to dress herself in the garb of fancy, should reject mere ornamental flourishes in the important transactions of political debate, and the serious proceedings of a court of judicature.

Thus the eloquence of the ancients is not, perhaps, to be found either in the senate or the forum of Britain.—There is indeed a very great degree of merit in many of the harangues spoken in those places, but they come not up to the idea of Grecian or Roman eloquence. The defect, however, is probably not so much owing to a want of ability, as to a voluntary compliance with the taste and genius of the nation.

In the pulpit, indeed, we may find some vestiges of ancient oratory: but waving at present the enquiry, whether or not we resemble the ancients in this point, I shall proceed to transcribe a few observations on pulpit eloquence in general, which I collected not long ago by accident.

One evening last autumn, as I was walking in the fields near the city, to enjoy a little fresh air, I observed a man, somewhat advanced in years, and of a composed aspect, sauntering in the same path with myself, seemingly in profound meditation. For a considerable time neither of us chose to commence a conversation; till at length, when a tacit familiarity between us had removed the reserve of strangeness, the old man opened with an usual introductory topic, the serenity of the evening. For my own part, I never refuse to join in one of the most reasonable, as well as most agreeable pleasures of human life. By degrees, the severity of my companion's countenance brightened up as the conversation grew warm, and he told me he had just been hearing an excellent sermon at an evening lecture, and, as was his usual way, had taken this little turn in the fields to meditate on serious subjects without interruption. I must own I was rather startled at hearing this, apprehending I had fallen into the company of some methodistical enthusiast, who would endeavour to make a proselyte; but upon farther conversation, I found myself agreeably mistaken. The old man made some reflections, which, as they struck me at the time, I entered among my minutes as soon as I returned home.

"You must know, Sir," said he, "that I am an old-
"fashioned man. I go to church on Wednesdays and
"Fridays, according to my good old grandmother's direc-
"tions, who (well I remember it) used always to appoint
"me the bearer of her large print prayer-book bound in
"purple morocco. To these early impressions, perhaps, I
"owe all my oddities; and you will easily imagine what a
"queer fellow I am, when I inform you, that I put my fa-
"mily to the inconvenience of dining, on Sundays, a full
"hour sooner than common, for no other reason in the world
"but that I may do my duty towards my Maker, by go-
"ing to church in the afternoon. While my neighbours
"are at the playhouse, or the tavern, I can make shift to
"kill time at an evening lecture; and I often follow a fa-
"mous preacher of a charity sermon, with all the ardour
"with which a favourite player inspires the frequenters of
"theatrical entertainments. These are my usual diversions,
"and really, Sir, they have some advantages attending them.
"In the first place, they are not expensive; for what is a
"shilling thrown away now and then upon a trifling whim,
"since every man has his hobby-horse; such as relieving a
"suffering fellow-creature, or contributing to the education
"and support of a poor orphan? Secondly, I can go into
"any church, within the Bills of Mortality, without dan-
"ger of being pushed, and squeezed, and trodden upon,
"and stifled to death, as sometimes happens to those who
"follow more fashionable diversions; nay, and I can sit the
"whole time without being in the least overheated.

"Now, Sir, as I have constantly attended to various
"sorts of pulpit eloquence, I suppose I may pretend, with-
"out vanity, to be some judge of it. Do not, however,
"expect that I shall bring proofs of the justness of my re-
"marks from your Aristotles, your Tullies, or your Quinc-
"tilians; for I am a plain common man, and if I have any
"sense, God knows it is only plain common sense.

"Let me premise, that I shall now and then make use
"of the usual terms of division and subdivision. Such, for
"instance, as those edifying little words, First, secondly,
"thirdly, to conclude, to my next head, and the like. Con-
"sider, Sir, I have been long used to this style, and natu-
"rally run into it.

" Of preachers, I shall reckon four kinds; the Fine Man, " the Pretty Preacher, the Good Textman, and the Hum- " drum.

" First then of the first (forgive my seremonical style,) " namely, of the FINE MAN:

" A stentorophonic voice is the fundamental excellence " of your Fine Man, and a powerful excellence it is. No " sooner has the Fine Man uttered the pathetic and signi- " ficant phrase, 'to conclude,' than I have heard the whole " row of matrons, in the middle aisle, with one accord cry, " 'humph,' and immediately second their exclamation with " a torrent of tears, which flowed down their withered " cheeks, interrupted only by sighs and sobs. The next " qualification is flexibility of muscles. From this excel- " lence arise those violent contortions of the body, that " wringing of the hands, beating of the breast rolling of " the eyes, foaming of the mouth, and other symptoms of " madness, which never fail to gain the applause of the " weeping congregation. The next—but what am I " about, Sir? In truth I cannot recollect any real excel- " lencies; as for sense, learning, argument, these are not " to be expected in your Fine Man: but then the want " of these is abundantly supplied by noise, nonsense, and " grimace.

" To come to my second head. Secondly then, as " was before laid down, we treat of the PRETTY PREA- " CHER.

" The Pretty Preacher is an imitator of the Fine Man. " As a copy, he is somewhat fainter than the original. " He whines, he sobs, he roars, but roars like any night- " ingale, as Shakespear has it. A soft effeminate voice, " a pretty face (for look ye, Sir, a pretty face is a more " powerful persuasive than the arguments of a Chilling- " worth,) and a white handkerchief, are the constituent " parts of a Pretty Preacher.

" These two sorts of Preachers are complete masters of " the passions, without in the least addressing the under- " standing. In truth, I cannot help comparing them to a " fiddler of old time, I remember to have heard of at school, " who made stocks and stones dance minuets, and rivers

" run the wrong way, and played a hundred such pranks " merely by the sound of the fiddle-strings. Just in the " manner a Fine Man, and a Pretty Preacher, can force " the tear from the eye, and the shilling from the inmost " recesses of the pocket, by dint of sound, which, in this " case, is never the echo of sense.

" To come to my third head. Thirdly then, the Good " TEXTMAN lays down good plain rules of morality, and " confirms every precept by a quotation from holy writ. " The grace of elocution he never aims at Rhetorical flou- " rishes, new remarks, or beautiful language, are not to be " required of him. In short, the intelligent part of the " congregation will seldom find their understandings enlight- " ened, or their fancy amused by him; but the plain " sober-minded Christian, provided he can distinguish what " the preacher says, may carry away something for his edi- " fication.

" To conclude with my fourth and last head. The " HUMDRUM seems to consider preaching and praying as a " kind of work, which if he performs so as to get his wa- " ges, he is satisfied. He reads the liturgy as he would " read a newspaper. In his preaching, he endeavours " neither to please, to strike, nor to convince, but thinks " the duty sufficiently well done, if it is but done ac- " cording to the rubrick, and at the established seasons. " To give him his due, he commonly preaches the best " divinity in the language; for as he is too lazy to com- " pose, he has nothing to do but to make choice of the " most celebrated compositions of others. He, however, " murders every sentence he reads. For the most part, " he chuses doctrinal rather than practical discourses; but " the misfortune is, that while he is making the mysteries " as clear as the sun at noon-day, his audience is common- " ly asleep as fast as a church. In a word, you may form " some idea, of this kind of preacher, by taking a view of " Hograth's print, of the sleepy congregation, where " there is a Humdrum holding forth, so as effectually " to infuse peace and quietness into the minds of his " hearers."

Here the old man's avocations obliged him to conclude

the converſation, with expreſſing a wiſh, "That men of "virtue and learning, as the clergy generally are, would "not ſuffer the effect of their excellent prayes and diſ- "courſes, which, if well delivered, might reform the "world, to be in a great meaſure loſt through indifference "or affectation."

No. CLXV. ON THE SUPERIOR VALUE OF SOLID ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

A DIALOGUE BETWEEN CICERO AND LORD CHESTERFIELD.

Eſſe quam videri. SALL.

Cicero. MISTAKE me not. I know how to value the ſweet courteſies of life. Affibility, attention, decorum of behaviour, if they have not been ranked by philoſophers among the virtues, are certainly related to them, and have a powerful influence in promoting ſocial happineſs. I have recommended them, as well as yourſelf. But I contend, and no ſophiſtry ſhall prevail upon me to give up this point, that to be truely amiable, they muſt proceed from goodneſs of heart.—Aſſumed by the artful to ſerve the purpoſes of private intereſt, they degenerate to contemptible grimace and deteſtable hypocriſy.

Cheſt. Excuſe me, my dear Cicero; I cannot enter farther into the controverſy at preſent. I have a hundred engagements at leaſt; and ſee yonder my little elegant French Compteſſe. I promiſed her and myſelf the pleaſure of a promenade. Pleaſant walking enough in theſe elyſian groves. So much good company too, that if it were not that the canaille are apt to be troubleſome, I ſhould not much regret the diſtance from the Thuilleries.——But adieu, mon cher ami, for I ſee madame * * * is joining the party. Adieu, Adieu!

Cic. Contemptible wretch!

Cheſt. Ah! what do I hear? Recollect that I am a

man of honour, unuſed to the pity or the inſults of an upſtart, a *novus homo*. But perhaps your exclamation was not meant of me—if ſo, why—

Cic. I am as little inclined to inſult as to flatter you. Your levity excited my indignation; but my compaſſion for the degeneracy of human nature, exhibited in your inſtance, abſorbs my contempt.

Cheſt. I could be a little angry, but, as bienſéance forbids it, I will be a philoſopher for once.—A-propos, pray how do you reconcile your, what ſhall I call it—your unſmooth addreſs to thoſe rules of decorum, that gentleneſs of manners, of which you ſay you know and teach the propriety as well as myſelf.

Cic. To confeſs the truth, I would not advance the arts of embelliſhment to extreme refinement. Ornamental education, or an attention to the graces, has a connection with effeminacy. In acquiring the gentleman, I would not loſe the ſpirit of a man, There is a gracefulneſs in a manly character, a beauty in an open and ingenuous diſpoſition, which all the profeſſed teachers of the arts of pleaſing know not to infuſe.

Cheſt. You and I lived in a ſtate of manners, as different as the periods at which we lived were diſtant. You Romans, pardon me, my dear, you Romans—had a little of the brute in you. Come, come, I muſt overlook it. You were obliged to court plebians for their ſuffrages; and if *ſimilis ſimili gaudet*, it muſt be owned, that the greateſt of you were ſecure of their favour. Why, Beau Naſh would have handed your Catos and your Brutuſes out of the ball-room, if they had ſhewn their unmannerly heads in it; and my Lord Modiſh, animated with the conſcious merit of the largeſt or ſmalleſt buckles in the room, according to the temporary ton, would have laughed Pompey the Great out of countenance. Oh, Cicero, had you lived in a modern European court, you would have caught a degree of that undeſcribable grace, which is not only the ornament, but may be the ſubſtitute of all thoſe laboured attainments which fools call ſolid merit. But it was not your good fortune, and I make allowances.

Cic. The vivacity you have acquired in ſtudying the

writings and the manners of the degenerate Gauls, has led you to set too high a value on qualifications which dazzel the lively preceptions with a momentary blaze, and to depreciate that kind of worth which can neither be obtained nor understood without serious attention, and sometimes painful efforts. But I will not contend with you on the propriety or impropriety of the outward modes which delight a monkey nation. I will not spend arguments in proving that gold is more valuable than tinsel, though it glitters less. But I must censure you, and with an asperity too, which, perhaps, your graces may not approve, for recommending vice is graceful, in your memorable letters.

Chest. That the great Cicero should know so little of the world, really surprises me. A little libertinism, my dear, that's all; how can one be a gentleman without a little libertinism?

Cic. I ever thought that to be a gentleman, it was requisite to be a moral man. And surely you, who might have enjoyed the benefit of a light to direct you, which I wanted, were blameable in omitting religion and virtue in your system.

Chest. What! superstitious too!—You have not then conversed with your superior, the philosopher of Ferney. I thank Heaven, I was born in the same age with that great luminary. Prejudice had else, perhaps, chained me in the thraldom of my great grandmother. These are enlightened days, and I find I have contributed something to the general illumination, by my posthumous letters.

Cic. Boast not of them. Remember you were a father.

Chest. And did I not endeavour most effectually to serve my son, by pointing out the qualifications necessary to a foreign ambassador, for which department I always designed him? Few fathers have taken more pains to accomplish a son than myself. There was nothing I did not condescend to point out to him.

Cic. True: your condescension was great indeed. You were the pander of your son. You not only taught him the mean arts of dissimulation, the petty tricks which degrade nobility; but you corrupted his principles, fomented his passions, and even pointed out objects for their gra-

tification. You might have left the task of teaching him fashionable vice to a vicious world. Example, and the corrupt affections of human nature, will ever be capable of accomplishing this unnatural purpose. But a parent, the guardian appointed by nature for an uninstructed offspring introduced into a dangerous world, who himself takes upon him the office of seduction, is a monster indeed. I also had a son. I was tenderly solicitous for the right conduct of his education. I intrusted him indeed to Cratippus at Athens; but, like you, I could not help transmitting instructions dictated by paternal love. Those instructions are contained in my book of Offices; a book which has ever been cited by the world as a proof to what a height the morality of the heathens was advanced without the light of revelation. I own I feel a conscious pride in it; not on account of the ability which it may display, but for the principles it teaches, and the good, I flatter myself, it has diffused. You did not indeed intend your instructions for the world; but as you gave them to a son you loved, it may be concluded that you thought them true wisdom, and withheld them only because they were contrary to the professions of the unenlightened. They have been generally read, and tend to introduce the manners, vices, and frivolous habits of the nation you admired—to your own manly nation, who, of all others, once approached most nearly to the noble simplicity of the Romans.

Chest. Spare me, Cicero. I have never been accustomed to the rough conversation of an old Roman. I feel myself little in his company. I seem to shrink in his noble presence. I never felt my insignificance so forcibly as now. French courtiers and French philosophers have been my models; and amid the dissipation of pleasure, and the hurry of affected vivacity, I never considered the gracefulness of virtue, and the beauty of an open, sincere, and manly character.

No. CLXVI. CONJECTURES ON THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ORIENTAL AND SEPTENTRIONAL POETRY.

THE productions of the mind, like thoſe of the earth, are found to have different degrees of vigour and beauty in different climates. In the more northern regions, where the nerves are braced by cold, thoſe works are the commoneſt, and attain to the greateſt perfection, which proceed from the exertion of the rational powers, and the painful efforts of the judgment. The ſciences, like the hardy pine, flouriſh on the bleakeſt mountains; while the works of taſte and fancy ſeem to ſhrink from the rude blaſt, with all the tenderneſs of the ſenſitive plant, and to require the genial warmth of a nearer ſun to give them their full luxuriance and maturity. Ariſtotle, Newton, and Locke, were the natives and inhabitants of temperate regions. Experience indeed ſeems to prove, that all the mental powers exiſt in their greateſt degree of ſtrength and perfection among thoſe who inhabit that part of the globe which lies between the tropic of Cancer and the Arctic circle. No complete and celebrated work of genius was ever produced in the torrid zone.

But whether the diverſity of genius in countries nearer or remoter from the ſun proceeds from natural cauſes, or from the adventitious circumſtances of different modes of education, different views, and a different ſpirit of emulation, it is certain that the productions of Eaſtern and Northern genius are diſſimilar. Some ingenious critics have indeed pointed out a reſemblance between the Gothic and Oriental poetry, in the wild enthuſiaſm of an irregular imagination. And they have accounted for it, by ſuppoſing, with great probability, that in an emigration of the Aſiatics into Scandanavia, the Eaſtern people brought with them their national ſpirit of poetry, and communicated it to the tribes with whom they united. The reſemblance, therefore, in works produced ſince this union, does not prove that the Northern and Oriental genius were origi-

nally alike. Thoſe productions of either which are allowed to be original, and to bear no marks of imitation, have perhaps no other reſemblance than that which commonly proceeds from the ſimilar operation of ſimilar faculties.

It ſeems, indeed, that a cauſe may be aſſigned for this diverſity of Northern and Oriental productions, without attributing it to an eſſential difference in the original conſtitution of the human underſtanding. The imagination is ſtrongly affected by ſurrounding objects, and acquires vigour by frequent exerciſe. He who is placed in a climate where the ſerenity of the weather conſtantly preſents him with blue ſkies, luxuriant plantations, and ſunny proſpects, will find his imagination the ſtrongeſt of his faculties; and, in the expreſſion of his ſentiments, will abound in alluſions to natural objects, in ſimilies, and the moſt lively metaphors. His imagination will be his diſtinguiſhing excellence, becauſe it will be more exerciſed than any other of his faculties; and all the powers both of body and mind are known to acquire vigour by habitual exertion. He, on the other hand, whoſe lot it is to exiſt in a leſs favoured part of the globe, who is driven by the inclemency of his climate to warm roofs, and, inſtead of baſking in the ſunſhine amidſt all the combined beauties of nature, flies for refuge from the cold to the blazing hearth of a ſmoky cottage, will ſeek, in the exerciſe of his reaſon, thoſe reſources which he cannot find in the actual employment of his imagination. Good ſenſe and juſt reaſoning will therefore predominate in his productions. Even in the wildeſt of his flights, a methodical plan, the reſult of thought and reflection, will appear, on examination, to reſtrain the irregularities of licentious fancy.

Conſiſtently with this theory we find Oriental poetry exhibiting the moſt picturesque ſcenes of nature, and illuſtrating every moral ſentiment or argumentative aſſertion by ſimilies, not indeed exact in the reſemblance, but ſufficiently analogous to ſtrike and gratify the imagination. Strong imagery, animated ſentiment, warmth and vivacity of expreſſion, all of which are the effects of a lively fancy, are its conſtant characteriſtics. The accuracy of logic, and the ſubtilty of metaphyſics, are of a nature too frigid to

influence the Oriental writer. He feels not the beauty of demonſtration, he purſues not a chain of argument, and he ſubmits to the force of perſuaſion, rather from the dictates of his feelings than from rational conviction. He endeavours to influence his reader in the ſame manner, and commonly excites an emotion ſo violent, as to produce a more powerful effect than would be experienced, even from concluſive argumentation.

No. CLXVII. CURSORY REMARKS ON THE POETRY OF THE PROPHETS, OF ISAIAH IN PARTICULAR, AND ON THE BEAUTIES OF BIBLICAL POETRY IN GENERAL.

THE Sibylline oracles owed their ſolemn air, their credit, and their power over the fancy, to the dark and difficult ſtyle in which they were compoſed. Virgil's Pollio, ſuppoſed to have been written from a hint taken from the books of the Sibyls, is the moſt admired of his Eclogues; and a great ſhare of the pleaſure derived from the peruſal of it is juſtly attributed to the judgment of the poet, in leaving more to be underſtood than meets the ear. The forebodings of Caſſandra were not attended to by the Trojans; and perhaps the true reaſon was, that they were not completely underſtood. The witches in Magbeth add to the terrible ſolemnity of prophetical incantation, by its darkneſs and uncertainty.

Obſcurity ſeems to have been the characteriſtic of all writings pretending to prediction. It certainly increaſed their poetical merit, though among the Greeks and Romans, it was probably no more than a ſtudied artifice to evade, if the event did not correſpond to the prophecy, the imputation of impoſture. Thus were the oracles of Apollo delivered in ambiguous phraſes, which frequently admitted a contrary, and always a doubtful interpretation.

Without this artful proceeding, their authority had not

been so long maintained. Frequent failure, without any subterfuge to preserve the prophetical power unsuspected, would soon have silenced the Delphic priestess But while the ænigmatical prediction preserved the dignity of the oracle by inspiring awe, it contributed to its security by facilitating evasion.

The Sacred Prophecies have that obscurity which distinguishes this species of writing. The final cause of it, however, was to exercise the faith and sagacity of mankind. The beauty which it adds to the poetry cannot be supposed to arise from design or skill in poetry as an art, but is the necessary result of natural propriety. And none but the unbeliever will suppose that, like the oracles at Delphi, they admitted a doubtful, in order to admit a double construction.

The prophecy of Isaiah abounds in the beauties of Oriental poetry. The translation is a literal one, and, though it may be found inaccurate by a Lowth or a Kennicot, will, I believe, hardly admit of improvement in force, simplicity, and animation. It does honour to the feelings of the translators, who, though they have performed their task with so much spirit, had nothing else in view but fidelity. To refinement and taste they made no pretensions; and that their work is so well executed, must have been owing to the excellence of their natural sentiment. We have several literal translations of the ancient poets into English prose, which are in request among school boys. In these we find no remains of that beauty which has been celebrated in every age from its first production. Few of these are rendered so faithfully, word for word, from their originals, as the Scriptures, which, notwithstanding this disadvantage, are the sublimest and most interesting books in the English language.

That they are thus excellent, it may indeed be said, is not to be wondered at. They proceeded from that real inspiration to which the celebrated writers of antiquity only pretended. And if the enthusiasm, which the imaginary assistance of a fabulous deity excited, could diffuse that captivating spirit over the works of a mortal poet which has charmed every succeeding age, it will be an obvious infe-

rence, that the genuine affatus of the great Author of the univerſe muſt produce a work of eminent and unqueſtionable beauty. Such reaſoning is plauſible; but, in the preſent caſe, it may not be improper to obſerve that the divine inſpiration operated intentionally no farther than in dictating truth of repreſentation, and in laying open ſcenes of futurity; and that the beauties diſcoverable in the medium of compoſition, by which thoſe primary ends are accompliſhed, are but collateral and ſubordinate effects. Conſidered as ſuch, every man of ſentiment feels them of a ſuperior kind, and if he judges by the criterion of his undiſſembled feelings, muſt acknowledge, that though they are ſometimes reſembled in Homer, they are ſeldom equalled, and never excelled. Take a view of the poetical beauties merely as the productions of Iſaiah, a very ancient poet of Judea, and his writings will ſurely claim the attention of a man of letters, as much as thoſe of the native of Smyrna or of Aſcra.

They who pretend to an exemption from prejudice, evince the futility of their pretentions, when they attribute the general admiration of the Scriptures, as compoſitions, to opinions formed in their favour in the early period of infancy. The truth is, the prejudices which they have unreaſonably adopted againſt the doctrines derived from thoſe ancient books, extend themſelves to the ſtyle and ſentiment; but ſurely, excluſive of the religious tendency, and of the arguments for the authenticity of the books, they claim a great degree of veneration from their antiquity, and juſtly excite the attention of criticiſm, as curious ſpecimens of Oriental compoſition.

It might, indeed, have been expected, from the general taſte which at preſent prevails for the remains of ancient Engliſh poetry, that thoſe works, which juſtly boaſt a higher antiquity than any of the productions of North or South Britain, would have been particularly regarded. But, while the ballad of a minſtrel, beautiful perhaps, and well worth preſerving, has been recovered from its duſt, and committed to memory, the family Bible has been ſufferred to lie unopened, or has been peruſed by many only with a view to painful improvement, without an idea of the poſſibility of deriving from it the elegant pleaſures of literary entertainment.

Yet even the vulgar ſenſibly feel the force of beauties which they know not how to point out; and are affected with a very ſtrong ſenſe of pleaſure, while they are reading the Scriptures ſolely from motives of duty, and a deſire of edification. In truth, among thoſe whoſe natural taſte is not corrupted by falſe refinement, which perhaps is the moſt numerous, though not the moſt diſtinguiſhed part of the community, the Bible is read as affording all the delight of pleaſing poetry and hiſtory; and it may, therefore, juſtly be called the moſt popular book in the Engliſh language.

But all readers, whether vulgar or refined, who fully feel and acknowledge the admirable touches of nature and ſimplicity, which are obſervable in many parts of thoſe writings, will, perhaps, receive additional ſatisfaction, when they diſcover that their taſte is often conformable to claſſical ideas of literary excellence.

There is, in the preſent age, a very numerous tribe of readers, who have formed their taſte and ſentiments from the writings of the philoſophers on the continent, and from the ſceptical ſophiſtry of our own countrymen. They are known to make pretenſions to a very uncommon degree of refinement in their judgment of compoſition, and to condemn every work, whatever marks it may bear of a ſtrong though uncultivated genius, which wants the laſt poliſh of delicacy and correctneſs, and has nothing ſimilar to thoſe modern productions, with which alone they have been converſant. With all their boaſted comprehenſion of mind, they ſeem to want ideas, which may operate as principles in forming a juſt opinion of thoſe works which were compoſed before the invention of ſyſtematic rules, and before native ſentiment was ſuperſeded by the feeble, though elegant, feelings, of which we boaſt in a very advanced ſtate of civilization. Under theſe unfavourable prepoſſeſſions, the Bible appears to them as an aſſemblage of groſſneſs and vulgariſms, which, therefore, without determining upon the authenticity of it, they avoid reading, apprehending that they can derive no pleaſure from it, and that they may poſſibly corrupt their ſtyle, and catch inelegance.

With theſe it would be a valuable point gained, for their own ſakes as well as for ſociety, if they could be pre-

vailed on so far to lay aside their prejudices as to open the book and judge of it from what they feel and remark on a fair examination. If they could once be induced to read it with avidity, from an expectation of literary amusement, they could scarcely fail of receiving, at the same time, a more important benefit.

In an age like the present, when all orders are, in some degree, attached to letters, he certainly renders great service to religion, and consequently to society, who unites taste with theology, and excites the attention of the careless and sceptical to those books, of which a sense of duty enjoins the perusal, by setting their beauties in a new or a stronger light.

And that this opinion of the peculiar beauties of Isaiah is not singular, if it is necessary to appeal to any other proof than the common feelings of mankind, is evident from the judgment of a popular writer of our own, who, as he was indisputably a poet himself, will be allowed, by the most rigid critics, to be a competent judge of poetry. Mr. Pope's Messiah is one of the best known and most esteemed of his shorter works; but that it derived its chief merit from Isaiah there can be no doubt, and the amiable poet felt a pleasure to acknowledge. Though suspected to have been less a friend to religion than to virtue, he neglected not the opportunity which this pastoral afforded, to form a comparison between Isaiah and Virgil, in a few parallel passages, fairly displayed by a translation equally literal, and to exhibit the Oriental poet to great advantage. There are many parodies, imitations, and paraphrases of this animated prophet's poetry, all which, at the same time that they evince how difficult his excellencies are to be equalled, are proofs that he has been generally admired as a poet.

But, after all, the reader must judge of the sacred writings for himself. If he attends to what he feels, and lays aside prepossession, his judgment will be favourable and just. To remove a single prejudice, which can prevent the universal acceptance of books of universal concern, is to contribute greatly to the general happiness. An attempt to render the prophetic writers objects of particular attention, in an age when our most ingenious theologists are employ-

ed in illuſtrating their meaning at a lecture wiſely eſtabliſhed for that purpoſe, muſt, at leaſt, have the merit of being well-timed.

And ſurely every one who wiſhes to promote the deſirable coalition of taſte with piety, muſt accept, with gratitude, the labours of the venerable Lowth, whoſe lectures on the ſacred poetry of the Hebrews, and obſervations on Iſaiah, have diſplayed, in biblical literature, the unexpected charms of claſſic elegance.

No. CLXVIII. ON PREACHING, AND SERMON WRITING.

FEW inſtitutions can contribute more to preſerve civilization, and promote moral and intellectual improvement among all ranks of people, than the eſtabliſhment of public lectures, in every part of the kingdom, periodically repeated after a ſhort interval.

Such is the light in which are to be conſidered the diſcourſes appointed by the wiſdom of the church, to be every where read on the recurrence of the ſeventh day. By theſe the meaneſt and the moſt illiterate are enabled to hear moral and philoſophical treatiſes on every thing that concerns their ſeveral duties, without expence, and without ſolicitation.

And whatever is urged by men who are ill-affected to all religious inſtitutions, there is no doubt but that great political, as well as moral, benefit is derived to ſociety from a practice thus univerſal. But it is a misfortune long ago lamented, that men are incapable of eſtimating the real value of advantages, till experience has ſhewn what it is to want them.

It is certainly true, that ſince the acquiſition of books has been facilitated by their numbers, oral inſtruction is rendered leſs neceſſary. But though books are eaſily procured, yet even in this age of information, there are thouſands in the lower claſſes who cannot read. Beſides, it is a well-known truth, that the ſame precepts inculcated by a living inſtructor, adorned by a proper oratory, enforced by

a ſerious and authoritative manner, produce a powerful effect, not to be experienced in ſolitary retirement. There is likewiſe a ſympathy communicated in a numerous audience, which attaches the mind more ſtrongly to the ſubject.

The obvious utility of diſcourſes from the pulpit is proved by the deciſions of experience. For, notwithſtanding the complaints againſt the levity and profaneneſs of the age, churches are ſtill frequented with apparent pleaſure. And to be placed in a ſituation where a good preacher reſides, is by many eſteemed a very eſſential requiſite to an agreeable retreat.

For excellent preachers this nation has been long diſtinguiſhed; excellent, not ſo much in the talents of an orator, as in the compoſition of diſcourſes. With an uncultivated voice, in an uncouth manner, accompanied with awkward attitudes, they have delivered harangues ſcarcely excelled in the ſchools of Athens. As the French have exhibited their characteriſtic levity even in their boaſted ſermons, ſo the Engliſh have diſplayed their natural ſolidity.

The ſermons of the laſt century are indeed too long for the attention of modern indolence, but they abound with beauty that would reward it. Jeremy Taylor poſſeſſed an invention profuſely fertile; a warm, rich, lively imagination; a profound knowledge of authors ſacred and profane, poetical, hiſtorical, philoſophical. He has embelliſhed his ſermons with citations from them, and has interwoven their gold into the rich tiſſue of his own compoſition.

Nearly at the ſame time with Taylor aroſe Iſaac Barrow, a mighty genius, whoſe ardour was capable of accompliſhing all it undertook. The tide of his eloquence flows with ſmooth yet irreſiſtible rapidity. He treats his ſubject almoſt with mathematical preciſion, and never leaves it till he has exhauſted it. It has been ſaid, that a late moſt popular orator of the Houſe of Lords aſſerted, that he owed much of the fire of his eloquence to the ſtudy of Barrow.

His editor, Tillotſon, is more popular. His merit is unqueſtionably great, and his fame has been extended to very exalted heights by the praiſes of Addiſon. He writes with ſufficient judgment and perſpicuity; but there are thoſe who venture to ſuggeſt, that he has been too much celebra-

ted as a model of fine compoſition. They allow him every praiſe as a moſt excellent divine; but when they conſider him as a writer, they think his periods might have been ſhorter, and his rhythm more harmonious.

Sharp has been juſtly celebrated for the force, the purity, the perſpicuity of his ſtyle, and the ardent flow of unaffected piety.

Of a very different character from theſe, South has obtained a great and deſerved reputation. Wit was his talent, yet he often reaches ſublimity. He is, however, one of thoſe authors who is to be admired and not imitated. To excite a laugh from the pulpit, is to inſpire the hearer with a levity of temper ill-adapted to the indulgence of devotional feelings. The taſte of the age in which South flouriſhed gave countenance to pulpit jocularity. But tho' it is true that the lovers of comedy have found their taſte gratified in the peruſal of South's ſermons, yet the man of a ſerious mind alſo will diſcover many ſolid arguments, many judicious obſervations, and many fine expreſſions, and a great deal of true eloquence, intermixed with a ſeries of proſaic epigrams.

The ſagacious Clarke pretended not to wit. He affected not the ambitious ornaments of rhetoric. He rarely reaches the ſublime, or aims at the pathetic; but in a clear, manly, flowing ſtyle, he delivers the moſt important doctrines, confirmed on every occaſion by well-applied paſſages from ſcripture. If he was not a ſhining orator, according to the ideas of rhetoricians, he was a very agreeable as well as uſeful preacher. He was not perfectly orthodox in his opinions; a circumſtance which has lowered his character among many. Certain it is, that he would have done more good in the world, had he confined his labours to practical divinity. Speculative and polemical divinity commonly diffuſes ſcepticiſm, without contributing any thing to moral reformation.

The ſermons that have been preached at Boyle's Lectures are among the beſt argued in the language. They have been the laboured productions of the moſt ingenious men. But the whole collection never did ſo much good as a ſingle practical diſcourſe of Tillotſon.

Atterbury was a polite writer. His ſermons probably owed ſome of their fame, among his cotemporaries, who have laviſhly applauded him, to his mode of delivery in the pulpit; for the Tatler ſays, it was ſuch as would have been approved by a Longinus and Demoſthenes. He ſeems to have introduced the very judicious method of addreſſing the underſtanding in the beginning of the ſermon, and the paſſions at the cloſe.

Rogers, ſays his panegyriſt Dr. Burton, poſſeſſed an eloquence, nervous, ſimple, perſuaſive, and beautiful. An unſtudied elegance marks his ſtyle. He ſeems to have attained to that nice judgment, which adapted the ſame diſcourſe to a ruſtic, a city, an academical congregation. In a profeſſed eulogium it is indeed allowable to exaggerate; yet what Burton has advanced is confirmed by peruſing the ſermons of Rogers. They are perſpicuous, ſolid, and written with remarkable eaſe.

Seed has obtained a great and deſerved popularity. With a rich and ſportive fancy he combined a ſolid judgment. Unlike the generality of thoſe writers who affect to be flowery, he abounds in ſound argument, and in juſt remarks on human life. A ſevere critic would condemn him for a profuſion of embelliſhment; but I know not how it is, he had the ſkill to apply it without cauſing ſatiety.

Such are the more popular of our Engliſh ſermon-writers, the models of thoſe many divines, who, with very great merit, poſſeſs not the reputation of remarkable originality. To enumerate them all were an endleſs taſk; for of no books in the Engliſh language has there been ſo unceaſing a ſucceſſion, as of ſermons; and to ſpeak of living writers with freedom, is too often like thruſting a hand into the neſt of the hornet.

Of late there have appeared publications of ſermons addreſſed to perſons of particular ages or deſcriptions. Though ſome of them exhibited a highly florid eloquence, and were received with great applauſe, yet they were too much ornamented, and, like many kinds of food, poſſeſſed a ſweetneſs which delights for a moment, but ſoon terminates in loathing. They amuſed the imagination, and ſometimes

touched the heart; but they left to the underſtanding little employment.

Sermons, which came forth with leſs eclat, will ſtand a better chance of deſcending to poſterity, Such are thoſe of Sherlock, Secker, and Jortin. The happineſs of mankind is concerned in the preſervation of their works, while thoſe of the frothy declaimer are daily dropping unregretted into the gulph of oblivion.

It is to be lamented, that the glaring and meretricious embelliſhments of the ſuperficial writer are more commonly imitated by young preachers, than the chaſter beauties of the ſound divine. Fine language, as it is called, with a few hacknied ſentiments and addreſſes to the paſſions, often conſtitute the whole merit of diſcourſes preached before the moſt numerous congregations in the metropolis.

The paſtors of the largeſt flocks uſually affect popularity. Extemporary preaching is one of the moſt effectual means of obtaining it. It always pleaſes the vulgar: probably becauſe it conveys the idea of immediate inſpiration. It is true alſo, that by pleaſing the vulgar, it is enabled to affect them. But yet there are many reaſons to prevent its reception among the judicious. It may raiſe the paſſions, it may communicate a momentary fit of devotion; but from its haſty production it can ſeldom be correct or ſolid. It is, indeed, ſeldom attempted but by the ſuperficial. The greateſt divines have not been preſumptuous enough to lay before their audience the effuſions of the moment, but have uſually beſtowed much time and care in the compoſition of a ſingle ſermon. We are indeed informed that Clarke ſometimes preached without written notes; but the number of his printed ſermons is a proof that this was not his general practice. They who poſſeſs the abilities of a Clarke may, however, ſafely venture to produce an unpremeditated harangue. But they alſo would do right to recollect, that the orations even of Demoſthenes himſelf ſmelled of the lamp.

Againſt thoſe who prepare their diſcourſes, a general complaint has been made, that ſermons are become in theſe days merely moral eſſays. There was a time when a paſſage from ſcripture, well introduced, was eſteemed a flower

far surpassing every ornament of rhetoric. It is now avoided as an ugly patch, that chequers with deformity the glossy contexture.

A professed Christian preacher, addressing a professed christian audience, should remember, that, however beautiful his discourse, if it is no more than a moral discourse, he may preach it, and they may hear it, and yet both continue unconverted heathens.

Every congregation of real christians wishes to find all morality deduced from scripture, and confirmed by it. Moral precepts thus adorned, come from the pulpit as from an oracle. Scriptural language is not inelegant; but if it were, a preacher should let motives of duty exclude ostentation. In truth, he never appears to greater advantage, than when he seems to forget his own excellence, and to lose sight of himself in the earnestness of his endeavours to promote the welfare of his audience.

No. CLXIX. ON THE NEGLECT OF ANCIENT AUTHORS. IN A LETTER.

THOUGH it be true, as you remark, that, in the present times, learning is universally admired, and the character of a man of taste and letters is affected not only in colleges, but in polite circles; not only by the philosopher, but by the beau and the coxcomb; yet is it to be lamented, that there seems to remain no general relish for solid erudition, very little veneration for inimitable productions of Greece and Rome, and but a slight attention to the more abstruse sciences and abstracted disquisitions. We read for pleasure, for amusement, for mere pastime, which dry argument and connected reasoning cannot always furnish. Light, airy, superficial compositions, without fatiguing the intellect, flatter the imagination; and for the sake of this empty satisfaction, to this trivial kind of reading is our time devoted, without regard to improvement of morals or enlargement of understanding.

From neglecting the writers of antiquity, we become

ignorant of their beauties, vainly suppose that excellence is confined to modern authors, and that the ancients can be admired only by prejudice and bigotry. Even they who are really sensible of the excellence of the classics, are willing, because they have neglected the study of them, to depreciate their merits, and to extenuate the infamy of their ignorance, by pretending that the knowledge of them is not desirable. Some there are, who, though they profess an admiration of the ancients, read them not in the originals, because they think it possible, without the trouble of loading their memories with dead languages, to taste all their beauties through the medium of translations.

To those who affirm, that an admiration of the ancients is founded on prejudice, it is sufficient to reply, that the unanimous applause of whole nations, for many ages, cannot, with the appearance of reason, be attributed to implicit attachment or ignorant wonder.

As for those who condemn the Greek and Latin authors, because they will not take the pains to understand them, they are to be censured for their indolence, and despised for their artifice: and they who read a Horace or a Virgil, in an English translation, however well performed, must be told, that they will form no better idea of the inexpressible graces of these poets, than they would receive of the masterpieces of a Raphael or a Guido, from the daubing of a mere copyist. In the transfusion from one language to another, as it has been frequently remarked, the spirit evaporates, and seldom any thing remains but a *caput mortuum*.

The matter may be preserved, the ideas justly exhibited, the historical part accurately represented; but the manner, the style, the beauties of diction, which constitute more than half the excellence of the classics, can seldom be transferred to a modern language. They who read translations only, are like those who view the figures of a beautiful piece of tapestry on the wrong side.

I must then earnestly recommend it to you, if you wish to taste the genuine sweets of the classic streams, to drink at the fountain.

No. CLXX. ON THE RETIREMENT OF A COUNTRY TOWN. IN A LETTER.

Romæ rus optas, absentem rusticus urbem
Tollis ad astra—— HOR.

SIR,

MY father had a lucrative place in the Customs: but as his family was large, he was unable to leave us fortunes, and contented himself with placing us in such situations in the world, as would give us an opportunity of acquiring a decent provision, if we should not be wanting to ourselves. It was my lot, after having received a tincture of classical education, to be put apprentice to a genteel business at the west end of the town. As soon as I was out of my time, I set up for myself; and though I cannot boast that I ever was in a very great way, yet, by attention and frugality, I had accumulated, at the age of forty, a sum sufficient to enable me to live in a comfortable manner, without the anxiety and confinement of trade. A handsome legacy from a relation of my wife, at once determined me in my long meditated intention, to sell off at prime cost, and retire.

I had always entertained a great idea of the happiness of living in the country. It was, indeed, natural in one who had dwelt near forty years in a dusty ware-house, amidst the dirt, smoke, and noise of Houndsditch; and who had seldom made an excursion beyond the cake-house at Hoxton, or the bowling-green at Hackney.

One morning, while I was revolving in my mind the idea of retirement, I happened to cast my eye on an advertisement in the newspaper, in which a house, garden, and grounds, in a market-town, about five and thirty miles from London were announced to be let at fifty pounds a year. This appeared to me too advantageous a bargain to be neglected; for you must know, I gave a hundred a year for

my shop, the area of which was no more than three yards by four; and here were twenty acres of land, and a mansion that would contain my house ten times over, to be let for half the money. There was no time to be lost: I shut up shop, took my wife and family down, and settled immediately.

As I did not go into the country on an œconomical plan, I was resolved to launch out a little, and live, as I could very well afford it, in a moderately genteel style. I set up a post-chaise, kept several horses, and two livery-servants. This appearance placed me on a level with the best families in the neighbourhood, and accordingly I was visited by all who claimed the rank of gentlefolks.

But, alas! I found not, in this place, that happiness which I expected. I have been convinced by experience, that a market-town is not a proper situation for the retirement of those who wish to taste the pleasures of rural life, and to pass the evening of their days in a state of tranquillity. That you may judge of the impropriety of such a retreat, I shall give you an account of my reception in it, and of several circumstances, which render it less fit for the enjoyment of those peaceful and domestic pleasures, which every one who retires from business expects, than the noisiest street in the metropolis of the empire.

The first visits were paid us from motives of curiosity, under the pretence of politeness. Our persons, our address, our characters, were examined with all the severity of criticism, but without the candour of benevolence. The various remarks that were made, furnished, with improvements and embellishments, an inexhaustible fund of conversation for the next three months; and I have had an opportunity of procuring the literal reports of one or two of our examiners, which, as they have entertained me, I shall communicate for your amusement.

In the morning, after her first visit, the 'squire's wife set out to ease her mind of the burden of intelligence under which it laboured; which she did, in every house she entered, in nearly the following words:

"Well, have you seen the new-comers? Pray how do "you like Mrs. Townsend? Oh! I have a charming lit-

" tle anecdote concerning her. You muſt know, I have " learnt who ſhe was before ſhe was married. I thought as " much—do you know her father was a cheeſemonger in " Thames-ſtreet—but he broke, you muſt know, and ſo " Miſs was taken from the boarding-ſchool, and in proceſs " of time arrived at the high dignity of upper-maid to al- " derman Portſoken's lady. But, being vaſt pretty, you " muſt know, and having had a prodigious fine education, " Mr. Townſend the common-council-man fell in love with " her, and married her. This is all fact, you may depend " upon it; for our Sally heard it this very morning at the " ſhop—Can't ſtay; but thought I would call and let you " know. You ſee how high ſome people hold up their " heads, but you'll underſtand how to look upon 'em now. —I have a little hundred places to call at; ſo good morn- ing."

Miſs Prue, a maiden lady of irreproachable character, ſet off on the ſame expedition, as ſoon as ſhe had put on her morning-cap. Brimful of news, ſhe could hardly contain herſelf till ſhe arrived (as Foote deſcribes it) at the lawyer's braſs-knocker and mahogany-coloured door. No ſooner was ſhe ſeated, than out it flew—

" Well, Mrs. Leaſum, we were at the new-comer's laſt " night; and ſuch a night! why they know no more of " cards———As to the father and mother, one ſhould " not expect much from perſons who, I ſuppoſe, got all " their money in Houndſditch; but really I pity the poor " girls. They ſat ſilent half an hour; and then aſked " me, Lord help 'em! if I had read the laſt new thing " that came out? Pray what do you think of their per- " ſons?—Some people ſay the younger is handſome; and " indeed ſhe does ſeem very good-natured. But as to " beauty!—all I ſhall ſay is—ſhe does not pleaſe me. To " be ſure, they are both fair enough too—their features " pretty regular, and ſome think their eyes very fine—but, " Lord! ſo awkward, ſo modeſt and yet at the ſame time, " ſo much of the city air about them, that they are abſo- " lutely intolerable.—In ſhort, I don't chuſe to ſpeak out " —I am always tender on the ſubject of characters—but " I have heard ſomething—" Here ſhe concluded with a whiſper, and in a great hurry withdrew.

The next house she called in at, was the apothecary's. The apothecary was glad of a mouthful of news for his patients. His patients swallowed it eagerly, and soon afterwards evacuated themselves on all their visitors, who went home in great spirits, to spread what they had picked up among their families and friends; and thus in the space of twenty-four hours, it was communicated over the whole parish.

With respect to myself, at the first weekly club after our arrival, the 'squire, the attorney, the apothecary, and two or three gentlemen sots, who lived upon their means, as it is called, sat in judgment upon my character. After much debate, in which an equal portion of candour and discernment was displayed, I was found guilty of being a cockney, of never having hunted, of never having shot a partridge, of keeping a poor table, and yet, at the same time, living above my fortune, and lastly, of having a great deal of pride that little became me. The result was, that though they should condescend to call upon me, as long as my pipe of excellent port lasted, yet I was not to be admitted a member of their jolly society.

It is true, I visit, and am visited; but as I really do not take much pleasure in a drunken bout; as I am not very well skilled in farming or fox-hunting; and from a tenderness of constitution, am obliged to be abstemious in the articles of eating and dringing, we commonly have more form in our meetings than cordiality. To assemble together for the sake of liberal and manly conversation, is held insipid. My sons are never at home; and my daughters, who have been taught to set a high value on mental accomplishments, neither give nor receive much satisfaction in the company of those, who think it the very summit of education, to have learned, at a boarding school, to dance and play a minuet.

The envy the jealousy, and the impertinence of the lower sort of people is not less conspicuous and troublesome than that of their superiors. If we send to buy any thing, we are forced to pay something more than any body else, because we are the rich new-comers. If my cow happens to break into neighbour Hodge's field, she is pounded with-

out notice, becauſe, forſooth, ſhe is the Londoner's cow. If we walk down the town, all the doors and windows are flung open, and crowded with ſpectators, juſt as it is in London at my lord mayor's ſhow. My poor wife and daughters ſilks and ſattens are criticiſed with unrelenting ſeverity.

Whenever my ſervants go to any ſhop, a ſet of goſſips make a point of meeting them, in order to aſk what I had for dinner, how much ſmall-beer is conſumed by us in a week, and a thouſand ſimilar queſtions. No little art is made uſe of to perſuade them that I am ſtingy, and that my place is the worſt in the town; though to my certain knowledge, I am ſo far impoſed upon, being a ſtranger, as that I am forced to pay a third more wages than any body elſe in the neighbourhood.

Nothing paſſes in my houſe which does not become matter of general converſation. If a couſin or an old acquaintance comes from London to ſpend a few days with me, no pains are ſpared to learn of the ſervants who and what he is; and if my ſervants know nothing about him, Miſs Prue takes care to ſuggeſt that he is in ſome low trade, a mere mechanic in his beſt ſuit of cloths. If he ſhould take an evening walk with my daughters, unaccompanied with me or my wife, he is going to be married to one of them directly. His name, his age, his origin, are immediately divulged; the fortune on both ſides aſcertained, and the day fixed.

If my wife and I happen to ſpar a little, as is uſual among thoſe who love one another with the ſincereſt affection, a report is immediately circulated that I uſe my wife, or that ſhe uſes me ill, and that, notwithſtanding appearances to the contrary, we do not live happily together. I can never buy nor ſell a horſe, a cow, or a pig, nor change a ſervant, but I am called behind my back a fool for my pains, and it is hinted that I do not know what I am about; and indeed how ſhould I, ſince I am a cit? If I make an alteration in my garden, dig a ditch, mend a pig-ſtye, or thatch a hovel, my taſte, my judgment, my prudence, are called in queſtion, and it is charitably wiſhed that I do not bring my noble to ninepence, and my nine-

pence to nothing. If by the careleſſneſs of my cook-maid, a joint of meat ſhould happen to be a little tainted in the dog-days, it gets wind, and it is immediately ſaid that I feed my family on ſtinking meat for cheapneſs. If a loaf ſhould be a little mouldy in damp weather, I am railed at for keeping my bread till it is ſpoiled, rather than give it to a poor creature who is periſhing with hunger. In ſhort, hardly a mouſe can ſtir in any part of the houſe, from the parlour to the ſcullery, but the barber, the chandlerſhop-keeper, the landlady at the ale-houſe, the mantua-maker, and the char-woman, find means to get a knowledge of it for the entertainment of their cuſtomers.

Till I lived in this place, I never thought myſelf of ſuch conſequence as to merit general attention. In London, my next door neighbour neither new nor cared what paſſed in my parlour and kitchen. I can however eaſily account for this difference. In a market town, of no great opulence or extent, there are not objects enough to divert the idle. No plays, no auctions, no fine ſhops, no ſhew-glaſſes. Scarcely any amuſement for ſots, goſſips, and old maids, but thinking and talking on the affairs and families of other people. The ſettlement of a ſtranger in their town is food to them for years. They have been too long uſed to the natives to find any novelty in their concerns, and perhaps have been induced to regard them with that partiality of long acquaintance or of relationſhip, which precludes malevolence. But ſtrangers are lawful game; and the cruelty of little minds is found to take a pleaſure in detracting from their characters, and defeating by falſe and malignant repreſentations, thoſe ſchemes of happineſs with which they flattered themſelves in retirement.

Sick of ſuch impertinence, and diſguſted with the ill-nature of all around me, I have reſolved to quit the market-town, and have juſt hired a houſe delightfully ſituated in a diſtant village. It is the paternal habitation of a man, who, having hopes of riſing at court, chuſes to leave this charming retreat, for a ſmall dark houſe in one of the diſmal lanes that lead into the ſtrand. I ſhall have no near neighbours but the vicar, who is not only a learned, virtuous, religious, and benevolent, but alſo an agreeable man.

His family, all of whom have that elegance of mind which results from a taste for letters, will be much with mine. They have already formed a reciprocal attachment. And I hope to have found at last, in this place, that happiness which I vainly sought in a more frequented situation. Of this I am confident, that the honest simplicity of the rustics, if it is not agreeable, is far less disgusting, than the pert, affected ill-natured airs and manners of the little half-bred gentry in little country towns.

The beauties of nature untouched by art, an air sweet as it blows over the blossomed vale, peaceful hours, social cheerfulness, domestic joys, rural dignity these are mine in my village retreat. Nor do I regret the loss of formal visits, and that wretched intercourse with little minds, which, while it wore away life in insipidity, exposed me to the envenomed shafts of unmerited calumny.

No. CLXXI. CURSORY THOUGHTS ON EPISTOLARY WRITERS.

WHEN a writer has distinguished himself in his studied performances, and pleased us in those works which he intended for our perusal, we become interested in all that concerns him, and wish to be acquainted with his ideas, as they flowed without any view to their publication, in the open communications of a private and friendly correspondence. Beautiful minds, like beautiful bodies, appear graceful in an undress. The awe which they inspire, when surrounded with all their dignity, is sometimes more striking than pleasing; but we feel ourselves relieved when admitted to their familiarity. We love to retire behind the scenes, and to observe the undisguised appearance of those who please us when industriously decorated for public exhibition. From this cause it has arisen, that private letters of great men have been always read with peculiar avidity.

The Greeks, remarkable as they were for diversity of

compoſition, have not left many models in the epiſtolary ſtyle. There is no doubt but that Xenophon excelled in it, though moſt of the letters which he wrote, have either not been collected or preſerved. Thoſe of Socrates, Antiſthenes, Ariſtippus, Xenophon, Æſchines and Philo, have never been popular. Thoſe which paſs under the name of Ariſtænetus, are of a taſte leſs reſembling the attic than the oriental. The deſcriptions in them are poetically luxuriant, but the language is not pure, nor the ſtyle ſimple.

The epiſtles of Phalaris have been much read by the learned; but though, if genuine, they are curious monuments of the genius of the tyrant, they are not admirable ſpecimens of epiſtolary compoſition. They are better known from the violent diſpute they occaſioned between Bentley and Boyle, than from their intrinſic merit. In ſome part of that famous controverſy, Bentley ſays, with his uſual acrimony, that Boyle had made a bad book worſe by a bad edition of it.

Cicero, the world's great model in the oratorical and the philoſophical, is no leſs eminent in the epiſtolary ſtyle. He rivalled his great patterns, the Greeks, in eloquence and philoſophy; and he excelled them in his letters. His letters, indeed, were the genuine production of his unaſſiſted genius, and have a grace peculiar to themſelves. Many of his other works are profeſſedly imitations, but conducted with that art which characteriſes genius, and appropriates all it handles. His letters where not ſtudied, they were the effuſions of the moment, they aroſe from the occaſion, and pleaſe from their air of truth and unaffected propriety. Whether buſineſs, pleaſure, politics, philoſophy, or conjugal and paternal affection are their ſubjects, they are equally excellent and always pleaſing. He wrote them without the leaſt view of their coming to the public eye, and to this circumſtance they owe a great ſhare of their merit, their freedom from affectation. Near a thouſand of them remain, and furniſh abundance of hiſtorical information, at the ſame time that they exhibit the beſt models for this ſpecies of writing. They are thought not to appear to the beſt advantage in the ſpecimens which Dr. Middleton has inſerted in his life of Cicero. No one was better able to do

them juſtice than that great biographer; but it is ſaid, he committed the taſk of tranſlation to ſome inferior aſſiſtant.

There was an age when the letters of Pliny were preferred to thoſe of Cicero. They have, indeed, the glitter of an artificial poliſh, but they want the more captivating grace of natural beauty. They were ſtudied, and they wear the appearance of ſtudy. He who delights in elaborate and highly finiſhed compoſition, will be gratified in the peruſal of Pliny; but he will at the ſame time regret, if he has a taſte for propriety, that this labour was not beſtowed where it would have been better placed. In a philoſophical diſcourſe, or a formal harangue, we expect the interpoſition of art; but in an epiſtle, we are better pleaſed with the genuine effuſions of nature, than with the efforts of ingenuity.

Seneca's moral eſſays have little right to the name of Epiſtles, with which he diſtinguiſhed them. They are little more than a collection of common-place obſervations, abounding in wit and ingenious turns, but wholly deſtitute of elegance and grace. His faults, indeed, are ſweet, as Quintilan ſaid,; but it is a ſweetneſs which cloys, and can ſcarcely pleaſe any but a vitiated appetite.

After the Latin had ceaſed to be a living language, many excellent books of letters were written in it. It was the univerſal language of learning. The literati of different nations, the rude language of which would not repay the labour of cultivation, wiſely choſe to communicate their thoughts in the pure dialect of the court of Auguſtus. Some of the earlieſt of theſe are diſgraced by the barbariſm of the times. But Petrarch ſhines amidſt the ſurrounding obſcurity. True genius, like his, was ſure to diſplay its luſtre, though it laboured under the diſadvantage of a prevailing corruption of taſte. His language is by no means a model.

Politian had juſt pretenſions to true genius. There is a warmth and vigour in his poetry, which fully proves him to have poſſeſſed the *mens divinior*. His epiſtles are elegant, but like thoſe of Pliny, whom he imitated, they are formal and affected. Upon the whole they are not unpleaſing, and abound with beautiful language.

Erasmus, a name that shines forth with peculiar glory in the annals of literature, justly possesses the first rank among the modern epistolary writers. His style indeed is not purely Ciceronian, though it displays many of its graces; it is entirely his own, though it often rises to a level with classical excellence. He was not so scrupulously exact in his taste, as to reject a barbarous and Gothic expression, if it conveyed his ideas precisely. But he had the skill to use it with such propriety, that it acquired, in his writings, a grace and dignity. No man was better acquainted with the works of Cicero, and no man, after a few prejudices, formed in his youth, were removed, entertained a higher opinion of his beauties, or knew better how to imitate them. But he despised the sect of Ciceronians, who would scarcely admit a particle that was not to be found in their favourite author. He ridiculed them with admirable wit and eloquence, in his dialogue Ciceronianus; nor would he give countenance to so ridiculous an affectation, by any part of his writings. More studious of copiousness and variety, of matter, than of a scrupulous imitation of any model, he selects the most expressive word he can find in the language, and, by a judicious composition, renders it agreeable and proper. With all their defects in point of purity of language, his letters are uncommonly entertaining; and have that spirit which genius can always exhibit, but which laborious dulness vainly imitates. There is a fund of Lucianic humour in all his more familiar writings; in his colloquies it is most conspicuous; but it is also very remarkable in many of his epistles. Had he lived in an age when polite learning was more generally encouraged and cultivated, his productions would have been models of elegance, not inferior to the boasted reliques of antiquity. But, unfortunately, he was engaged in the unpleasing disputes of pedantic theologists; and, instead of treading the flowery paths of Greek and Roman literature, for which he was adapted by nature, was obliged to toil through the thorny mazes of a barbarous, perplexed, and irrational system of divinity. His liberal mind soon perceived, and as soon avowed, the absurdity of the received modes and opinions; but he had too great a veneration for genuine christianity, to

neglect those studies which his profession, as a christian and an ecclesiastic, naturally led him to cultivate. He saw, and in great measure avoided, the inelegancies which abounded in the theological writings of his times; but it was not easy always to be upon his guard against them; and his mind retained a tincture of them, as waters are polluted with the impurities through which they flow.

I omit a great number of epistolary writers, who had little merit of their own, and who derived all their fame from a servile imitation of Cicero. Among these is Paulus Manutius, who is said to have often spent a month in writing a single letter. We see, indeed, in consequence of this scrupulous attention, an elegant and truly Ciceronian phraseology; but we observe none of the native graces of unaffected composition.

Our neighbours, the French, have arrogated great merit as epistolary writers. Their genius and their language appear to be well adapted to excel in it. But some of the most celebrated writers have renounced the advantages which nature gave them, and have spoiled all the beauties of sentiment and vivacity, by an unseasonable profusion of wit. Balzac wearies his reader with the constant recurrence of laboured ingenuity.

Voiture abounds with beautiful thoughts, expressed with great elegance. The language of compliment disgusts, in other writers, by its unmeaning sameness and formality. He has given it the grace of delicacy. But even he, tho' indisputably a fine writer, is justly censured by Bohours, for thoughts which the critic calls false. Like many others, he has neglected real beauties for artificial ornaments.

Our own countrymen have honourably distinguished themselves in this, as well as in every other kind of elegant composition. The epistolary style of Swift is thought, by many, to excel all others. It has purity, ease, expression, and force. Pope's letters are lively and delicate. Shenstone's are much read; but it may be doubted whether they have that peculiar and striking excellence which should place them among the classics of our country.

The late lord Chesterfield, though justly decried as a moral instructor, is admired as a writer of peculiar elegance.

No man more closely and successfully imitated the French in every circumstance. Like them, he writes with perspicuity, vivacity, and that gracefulness which is sure to please, and which he so strenuously recommends. He is himself a proof of the efficacy of the graces, for, with all his merit, he was certainly superficial, and yet obtained a degree of fame, which more solid writers have seldom possessed.

Much has been said on the epistolary style; as if any one style could be appropriated to the great variety of subjects which are treated of in letters. Ease, it is true, should distinguish familiar letters, written on the common affairs of life; because the mind is usually at ease while they are composed. But, even in these, there incidentally arises a topic, which requires elevated expression and an inverted construction. Not to raise the style on these occasions, is to write unnaturally; for nature teaches us to express animated emotions of every kind in animated language.

The impassioned lover writes unnaturally, if he writes with the ease of Sevigné. The dependant writes unnaturally to a superior, in the style of familiarity. The suppliant writes unnaturally, if he rejects the figures dictated by distress. Conversation admits of every style but the poetic, and what are letters but written conversation? The great rule is, to follow nature, and to avoid an affected manner.

No. CLXXII. ON THE NECESSITY OF EXERCISE, AMUSEMENTS, AND AN ATTENTION TO HEALTH IN A LIFE OF STUDY. IN A LETTER.

I HAPPENED accidentally to meet a fellow-collegian, with whom, before we were separated by the caprice of fortune, I was intimately acquainted. Surely it is he, said I; but, alas, how changed! pale, emaciated, with hollow and lack-lustre eye, is this my old school-fellow, whose ruddy cheeks and cheerful countenance displayed health and happiness? What can have reduced my poor friend to so

wretched a condition? Intemperance, or ſome dreadful diſeaſe, muſt have ſtolen away his youth, and hurried him to a premature old age.

While I was thus reflecting, he paſſed me without taking notice. He ſeemed indeed to be ſo entirely wrapped up in contemplation as to pay no regard to external objects. My curioſity and friendſhip were too much intereſted, to ſuffer him to leave me without giving ſome account of himſelf. I ſoon overtook him, and he no ſooner recogni ed me, and perceived my ſurpriſe at his appearance, than he proceeded to aſſign the cauſes of it.

" You know, my friend," ſaid he, " my firſt and ſtrong-
" eſt paſſion was for literary fame. Flattered by my friends.
" and encouraged at my ſchool, I perſuaded myſelf I was
" advancing in the career of glory, and, with all the ar-
" dour of enthuſiaſm, devoted every moment of my life to
" the purſuit of learning. Puerile diverſions had no charms
" for me. A book was my ſole delight, my conſtant com-
" panion, and was never laid aſide, but while my mind
" was employed in compoſition. During my reſidence at
" the univerſity, I ſpent the time which my companions
" allotted to rural amuſements, in examining thoſe repo-
" ſitories of ancient learning, the public libraries. I ſaw
" indeed the futility of ſcholaſtic logic, but a deſire to
" qualify myſelf for the public exerciſes, led me to the at-
" tentive peruſal of Wallis and Sanderſon. The ſame mo-
" tive engaged me in the dreary ſubtleties of metaphyſics.
" Such ſtudies engroſſed the greater part of my firſt three
" years, with little advantage, and no pleaſure. The fa-
" tigue would have been intolerable, had it not ſometimes
" been alleviated by the charms of poetry. My favourite
" Virgil and Horace, and every polite writer of modern
" times, afforded, in their turn, an agr eable recreation.
" My exerciſes were honourably diſtinguiſhed, and praiſe
" to an ingenuous mind is the beſt reward of learned la-
" bours.

" With my character for application and ſobriety (not
" to boaſt of my attainments) I found no difficulty in ob-
" taining orders. The head of my houſe procured me a
" curacy in a ſmall country town. Thither I went, not

" without my collection of books, the use of which I would
" not have foregone for a mitre. I had no other wish than
" to improve myself in learning, and to perform the duty
" of an ecclesiastic with decency and devotion. I was hap-
" py in the prospect of spending my time uninterrupted by
" the intrusion of my academical friends, whom youth and
" high spirits would often lead to a noisy behaviour little
" consistent with meditation. My want of experience con-
" cealed from me the difficulty of pursuing the line of con-
" duct which inclination pointed out. I found it was ne-
" cessary, to my good reception among my parishioners, to
" give up the greatest part of the day to a participation in
" their amusements. In vain was it that I laboured to excel in
" the pulpit. There was not a man in the place who had an idea
" of the dignity or utility of literary excellence, and who would
" not most cordially have hated even a Clarke or a Tillot-
" son, if he had never been in at the death of a hare, or
" drank his bottle at the club. The parson, in their idea
" of his character, was a jolly fellow in black, who was to
" lead a careless life all the week, and preach against it on
" Sundays. I could not bring myself to take delight in a
" fox-chace, and, though good-nature prevented me from
" shewing my dislike, I could never meet any of the hun-
" ters with satisfaction. The little pleasure I took in the
" only society that was to be obtained, still farther con-
" firmed me in my recluse mode of life. When my reso-
" lution appeared unchangeable, I was suffered to live as I
" pleased, with the character of an odd, but inoffensive
" man. In this unmolested retreat I found time to go
" through a complete course of ecclesiastical history. I
" acquired a sufficient knowledge of the oriental languages
" to enable me to read the Polyglott. I wrote a great
" number of sermons and theological treatises, and made
" many corrections, in the vulgar translation of the Bible.
" So wholly engrossed was I by my darling pursuits, that I
" seldom left my chamber. In vain did the vernal sun in-
" vite. The music of a pack of hounds, which frequently
" passed my window, had no charms in my ears. The ru-
" ral sports of every kind were tedious and insipid. To
" my books I returned from every trifling avocation with

" redoubled pleasure, and endeavoured to repay the loss of " an hour in the day, by devoting a great portion of the " night to study.

" It is really true, that my chief motive for application " was a love of learning. Yet I will be so ingenious as to " own, I sometimes formed a wish that my small share of " merit, if I had any, might attract the notice of my supe- " riors. There is a time of life when fame alone appears " to be an inadequate reward of great labour. It flatters " that natural love of distinction which we all possess, but " it furnishes no convenience in the time of want and infir- " mity. There was in the neighbourhood a little living of " one hundred a year, with a house and garden, in a style " of decent elegance which becomes a scholar. The pa- " tron was the esquire of the next parish, who had always " treated me with singular respect. I was foolish enough to " suppose his regard for my character would induce him to " bestow his benefice on me; but I found when it became " vacant, he had staked and lost the next presentation at a " game at whist with a clerical fox-hunter.

" I was at last taken notice of by my diocesan. He had " heard of my indefatigable diligence, and recommended " me to an eminent publisher, as a proper person to make " an index to a very voluminous work. I eagerly under- " took the task with a view to please so great a man, and " finished it in less than a year and a half. The books were " printed on a small letter and this work did my eyes an " injury which they will never recover; but it must be " owned, on the other hand, that the bookseller gave me in " return a bank note of ten pounds. An index author sel- " dom acquires reputation. He is indeed seldom known; " but if he happens to be discovered, the accuracy of his " work is, in the opinion of many, a kind of disgrace to " him. It seems to argue a degree of phlegmatic dulness, " and of patient labour, rarely in the power of genius. It " will not therefore be thought wonderful that this la- " borous work produced no other effects than the injury " of my eyes and the payment of my taylor's bill.

" In this curacy I still continue, without any prospect " of change, unless when blindness, occasioned by inten-

" perate ſtudy, or the infirmites of age, ſhall oblige me to
" reſign. I am not of a diſcontented diſpoſition, nor do I
" relate my condition with a deſign to criminate others
" for their neglect of me. Preferment I never ſought by
" thoſe methods which the world agrees to be the beſt ſuit-
" ed to procure it. I have therefore no right to complain of
" the want of that which I did not rightly purſue. My
" motive of this communication is to prevent others from
" incurring miſery by too great attachment to objects laud-
" able in themſelves. I can never diſcountenance an atten-
" tion to literature. I ſtill love it. I ſtill venerate thoſe
" that have excelled in it. But a ſincere regard for many
" of the moſt amiable and uſeful of my ſpecies induces me
" to remind them, that they have a body which requires
" a great ſhare of their attention, and that no ſatisfaction
" ariſing from ſtudy can ultimately counterbalance the loſs
" of ſight, and that long train of nervous diſeaſes ſuperindu-
" ced by unremitted application.

" I mean not to excite your ſympathy; nor will I exag-
" gerate my evils by deſcription. My appearance has alrea-
" dy convinced you that I am the victim of diſeaſe. Nor
" will you heſitate to believe that the ſtone, the gout, the
" hypocondria, which have worn out my tender frame,
" were derived from an attention unrelieved by the uſual
" and neceſſary relaxations.—Had I been wiſe enough to
" have mounted a horſe during the intervals of reading, and
" to have entered into cheerful company at the cloſe of a
" thoughtful day, I might have prolonged my favourite en-
" joyments to a happy old age.

" I am philoſopher enough to bear with patience a con-
" dition which I cannot alter; yet I ſometimes think,
" though without the leaſt degree of envy, that an old
" ſchool-fellow of mine, of a very different turn from my-
" ſelf, is far happier. I remembered I uſed to laugh at
" him, and think him very ſilly, when, at the time we
" were at the univerſity together, he would miſs an inge-
" nious lecture for the ſake of a ride, and ſpend the three
" ſhillings with which I ſhould have bought a book, in
" the hire of a horſe. It is true, indeed, that he needed
" not, and ought not, to have neglected his mental im-

" provement, because he had many opportunities of relaxa-
" tion after the hours of study were elapsed. Yet, if I
" judge of his conduct by the apparent effects of it at pre-
" sent, it appears to me in a less blameable light than it
" used to do. He is now at the age of sixty-three, for he
" was somewhat older than myself, and retains all the vi-
" gour and alertness of a young man. His countenance is
" hale, his limbs muscular, and he reads the service and the
" newspaper the only things he does read, without spec-
" tacles.

" He set out in life as friendless as myself. He enga-
" ged in a curacy in a sporting country. His love of field-
" diversions soon introduced him to what was called the best
" company. He possessed the external graces of behavi-
" our, and at the same time was deeply skilled in horse-flesh,
" and had Bracken's Farriery by heart. Such merits could
" not long pass unrewarded. A baronet in the neighbour-
" hood grew fond of him, and introduced him to his family;
" one of whom was an only daughter of no great personal
" or mental accomplishments. My friend, however, admir-
" ed her fortune, and found no difficulty in obtaining her
" hand. The living on which he now resides was part of
" her portion, and though of no great value, yet it furni-
" shes him with a pretty snug sporting-box. He common-
" ly reads prayers in his boots and spurs, while his hunter
" stands neighing in the porch till honest Moses has twang-
" ed through his nose the final and joyful Amen. It is
" true, my old friend has no taste, no learning, no refine-
" ment, but he has the use of his eyes, and a never-ceasing
" flow of spirits; he can walk as well as ever, possesses an
" excellent digestion, and plenty to furnish it with constant
" employment.

" But his example is not to be followed, since he has
" run into an extreme, more culpable, though less pernici-
" ous to himself than mine is to me. Far happier and
" wiser the philosophical Euphranor, who, with the
" warmest affection for learning, restrained it, as he has
" every other inordinate attachment, by the rules of pru-
" dence; and by paying all the attention which nature
" and reason require, to his body and to his mind, has advan-

" ced the condition of both to a high degree of attainable
" perfection."

No. CLXXIII. ON THE MERITS OF COWLEY AS A POET.

THE biographers of our Engliſh authors have ſometimes fallen into a miſtake, which renders the truth of their ſtory ſuſpected. Their accounts are truly panegyrics. The hero of their tales, like the lover in the romance, is adorned with every good quality. Not content to relate facts with impartiality, they extenuate what is culpable, and exaggerate all that can admit of commendation. In truth, they who have exhibited the lives of our authors, have uſually been the editors of their works; and either from a real and natural fondneſs for thoſe things on which they have beſtowed care, or from the leſs laudable motive of promoting the circulation of a book in which they were intereſted; have ſpoken too highly even of thoſe who merit moderate applauſe. But it is not wonderful if the trader preſents his own merchandize as the beſt in the market-place.

It was the lot of Cowley to be handed down to poſterity by a writer who was famous in his day for eloquence. Dr. Spratt probably undertook the office of a biographer, with a deſign to diſplay his talents in a ſpecies of oratory which the Roman rhetoricians called the demonſtrative. He diſcharged it well as an artiſt, but failed as an accurate hiſtorian. By placing Cowley in the firſt rank of poets, he has in effect degraded him from the ſubaltern ſtation, which he had elſe preſerved unmoleſted. Dr. Spratt owed much of his own fame to the poet, who had compared his ſtyle to the gentle and majeſtic current of the Thames; and returned the compliment, perhaps from other motives than thoſe of gratitude; for the higher Cowley was exalted, the greater honour was reflected on thoſe whom he had commended. Of this celebrated biſhop of Rocheſter, Lord

Orrery has said, few men have gained a greater character for elegance and correctness, and few men have deserved it less. And of the poet whom he praised, the great Dryden has with diffidence remarked, that somewhat of the purity of English, somewhat of more equal thoughts, somewhat of sweetness in the numbers; in one word, somewhat of a finer turn and more lyrical verse, is yet wanting.

Whatever are his defects, no poet has been more liberally praised. Lord Clarendon has said, he made a flight above all men: Addison, in his account of the English poets, that he improved upon the Theban bard: the Duke of Buckingham, upon his tombstone, that he was the English Pindar, the Horace, the Virgil, the Delight, the Glory of his Time. And, with respect to the harshness of his numbers, the eloquent Spratt tells us, that if his verses in some places seem not as soft and flowing as one would have them, it was his choice, and not his fault.

Such is the applause lavished on a writer who is now seldom read. That he could ever be esteemed as a Pindaric poet, is a curious literary phænomenon. He totally mistook his own genius, when he thought of imitating Pindar. He totally mistook the genius of Pindar, when he thought his own incoherent sentiments and numbers bore the least resemblance to the wild, yet regular sublimity of the Theban. He neglected those forms, the strophe, antistrophe, and epode, which even imitative dulness can copy. Sublime imagery, vehement pathos, poetic fire, which constitute the essence of the Pindaric ode, are incompatible with witty conceits, accurate antitheses, and vulgar expression. All these imply the coolness of deliberate composition, or the meanness of a little mind; both of them most repugnant to the truly Pindaric ode, in which all is rapturous and noble. Wit of any kind would be improperly displayed in such composition; but to encrease the absurdity, the wit of Cowley is often false.

If the end of poetry is to please, harmony of verse is essential to poetry, for, without it, poetry cannot please. It is not possible, that any whose ear has been attuned to the melody of good composition, should read a single ode of Cowly without being shocked with discord. There is often

nothing left but the jingle at the end to diſtinguiſh poems renowned for their ſublimity from affected proſe. Such poetry may juſtly incur the ridiculous title of proſe run mad.

Yet is there ſometimes interwoven a purple patch, as Horace calls it; a fine expreſſion, a truly poetical thought, an harmonious couplet; but it occurs not often enough to repay the reader for the toilſome taſk of wading through a tedious aſſemblage of diſproportionate and diſcordant ſtanzas. Of ſuch conſiſt his Pindarics; which though they procured him the greateſt ſhare of his reputation, deſerved it leaſt. Many of his other poems, if we conſider the rude ſtate of verſification, and the bad taſte of the times, have great merit; and had he made Tibullus his model, inſtead of Pindar, his claim to the firſt rank of elegiac poets had not been called in queſtion. The tenderneſs of love, and the ſoft language of complaint, were adapted to his genius. But he choſe to tread in the footſteps of Alcæus, as he ſays himſelf, who, according to the Halicarnaſſian, combined *megalophues kai edu*, the grand and the ſweet.

That he had a taſte for Latin poetry, and wrote in it with elegance, the well-known Epitaph on himſelf, upon his retirement, and an admirable imitation of Horace, are full proofs. But ſurely, his rhetorical biographer makes uſe of the figure hyperbole, when he affirms that Cowley has excelled the Romans themſelves. He was inferior to many a writer of leſs fame in the Muſæ Anglicanæ. But ſtill he had great merit; and I muſt confeſs I have read ſome of his Latin verſes with more pleaſure than any of his Engliſh afforded.

But, after all the honours that have been accumulated on his name as a poet, his great merit conſiſted in proſaic compoſition. In this department he is an elegant, a pleaſing, a judicious writer. His love of retirement and contemplation qualified him for a moraliſt; and it is much to be lamented, that he did not devote a greater part of his time to a kind of writing which appeared natural to him, and in which he excelled. The language of his heart ſhines forth in the little he has left us, and we cannot but love it.

Much more of that language would have deſcended to

poſterity, if his friends, from a miſtaken opinion of propriety, had not ſuppreſſed his private letters. Dr. Spratt and Mr. Clifford were avowedly poſſeſſed of many; and the very reaſon aſſigned by the biographer for their ſuppreſſion, ſhould have operated in their publication. The letters that paſs between particular friends, ſays he, if they are written as they ought to be, that is, I ſuppoſe, in an artleſs manner, can ſcarcely ever be fit to ſee the light. How great an injury would polite learning have ſuſtained, if the friends of Cicero had thought like Spratt and Clifford!

The would better have conſulted the reputation of the poet, had they pronounced the Pindarics unfit to ſee the light. Editors, in general, would act more honourably, in exhibiting only the beſt of their author's productions, than in praiſing, as well as publiſhing, all that has fallen from his pen. But, in truth, to have left out any part of his poems, would, in that age, have been an unpardonable omiſſion; for who ſhould dare to mutilate a Pindar!

Time, the great arbiter of reputation, has already begun to ſtrip the poet of his borrowed honours. A critic, whoſe genius and judgment keep pace with each other, and who illuminates every ſubject on which he treats, has allotted Cowley his juſt ſpecies of praiſe, and has given the world, in a judicious ſelection of his works, all that they poſſeſſed of real value.

Of theſe the proſe forms a principal part. It is written in a ſtyle ſufficiently flowing to prove that Cowley was not deſtitute of a muſical ear; a circumſtance which countenances the opinion of thoſe who maintain that he affected a rugged ſtyle. Was it a compliance with the taſte of the age, that induced him to affect deformity? unfortunate compliance with a deplorable taſte! He as well as they whom he imitated, Donne and Jonſon, were unqueſtionably poſſeſſed of great learning and ingenuity; but they all neglected the graces of compoſition, and will therefore ſoon be numbered among thoſe once celebrated writers, whoſe utility now conſiſts in filling a vacancy on the upper ſhelf of ſome duſty and deſerted library.

No. CLXXIV. CURSORY AND GENERAL HINTS ON THE CHOICE OF BOOKS.

THE ſcarcity of books, a few centuries ago, was the principal obſtacle to the advancement of learning. The multitude of them is become, in the preſent age, ſcarcely leſs injurious to its intereſts, by diſtracting the ſtudent in his choice, and by diffuſing an incorrect and undiſtinguiſhing taſte.

To read all books on all ſubjects, would require an uninterrupted attention during the longeſt life even of an Antideluvian. To read only the moſt celebrated, written in a few languages, is an employment ſufficient to fill up every hour of laborious application. For the ſake then of ſaving time, and of directing the judgmentof the inexperienced, it becomes an uſeful attempt to ſuggeſt ſome general hints, which may tend to facilitate ſelection.

One rule of the greateſt conſequence is, to read only, or chiefly, the original treatiſes in all the various departments of ſcience and literature. Nearly the ſame ſpace of time, though not the ſame degree of attention, is neceſſary to peruſe the faint copies of imitative induſtry, as would appropriate to the ſtudent the ſolid productions of native genius. This rule is more particularly to be obſerved on the firſt entrance on ſtudy. The foundation muſt be laid deep, and formed of ſolid materials. The ſuperſtructure will often admit ſlight and ſuperficial appendages. When we have ſtudied the fine relics of thoſe who have lived before us, we may derive much pleaſure from attending to the additional labours of cotemporary genius. But to begin with theſe is to found, like the fool recorded in the Goſpel, an edifice in the ſand.

It were no leſs preſumptuous than ſuperfluous to addreſs directions in the choice of authors, to the learned. But we may venture, without arrogance, to point out a few to the notice of the young and ingenious pupil, with a deſign to abbreviate or facilitate his labour.

He who is entering on the ſtudy of divinity, will naturally devote his firſt attention to the ſcriptures. The original language of the Old Teſtament is often unknown even to the learned and ingenious; and notwithſtanding what ſome critics and profeſſors have, as it were, officially obſerved on the ſubject, the neglect of it, though culpable, is ſeldom attended with much diſadvantage. But the knowledge of Greek is indiſpenſably neceſſary, if theology is purſued as a profeſſion.

The prophetical parts will claim the greateſt ſhare of attention in the peruſal of the Old Teſtament. Dr. Hard's Introduction to the Study of the Prophecies will be a ſufficient guide for ſubſequent application to them. To illuſtrate the New Teſtament, it will be proper to have recourſe to Percy's Key to it, to Trapp's Notes, to Locke on the Epiſtles, and to Mede on the Apocalypſe. With theſe aſſiſtances the ſtudent, who is not deficient in natural ability, will make a competent proficiency, even though he ſhould totally neglect thoſe myriads of treatiſes, which have rendered the body of divinity, as it is called, enormous beyond comprehenſion.

The ſtudent in phyſic is commonly introduced to the knowledge of it by a public lecturer, who ſuperintends, or at leaſt directs, his courſe of reading. Natural and experimental ſcience, in all their ramifications, are in ſome degree requiſite to his further advancement. Theſe alone will indeed render him ingenious in his cloſet, but will avail little at the bedſide without other aid. To theſe muſt be added a moſt accurate obſervation of the human frame in all its viciſſitudes of health, diſeaſe, and convaleſcence. The reading of caſes accurately delineated, is found to be the beſt ſuccedaneum where actual practice and obſervation are precluded. Syſtem is in general inſufficient and deluſive.

To the profeſſed lawyer, ſcarcely any book on the ſubject of law is unintereſting or uſeleſs. But he who purſues the ſtudy merely as an accompliſhment in a comprehenſive plan of education, will find all the neceſſary lights in the volumes of Grotius, Puffendorf, Taylor, Burn, and Blackſtone.

He who wiſhes to gain a complete knowledge of gram-

mar, may ſucceed in his attempt, without loading his memory with the works of Priſcian, or of thoſe thouſands who have toiled in this circumſcribed province. Let him, after having ſtudied grammatically the elements of Latin and Greek, digeſt the Minerva of Sanctius, the Hermes of Harris, and the introduction of Lowth.

The art of Rhetoric never yet formed an Engliſh orator. It is one of thoſe artificial aſſiſtances of genius, which genius wants not, and of which dulneſs can little avail itſelf. But as there are excellent books written on it, the general ſcholar muſt pay it his attention. Let him then read Cicero on the Orator, and Quinctilian's Inſtitutes, and he need not trouble himſelf with thoſe meagre treatiſes which give a hard name to the natural modes of expreſſion, and teach us that, like Hudibras, we cannot ope our mouths, but out there flies a trope.

He who is impelled by neceſſity or inclination to attend to logic, may with propriety neglect all the rubbiſh of the ſchools, and, next to the Stagyrite himſelf, ſtudy only the works of Saunderſon, Wallis, Watts, and Harris.

If the barren field of metaphyſics is ever capable of repaying the toil of cultivation, it can only be when the attention is confined to ſuch authors as Locke, Hucheſon, and Beattie.

If ethics are to be conſidered in the ſyſtematical method of a ſcience, the moral philoſophy of Hucheſon may be recommended as one of the cleareſt, the moſt elegant, and the conciſeſt treatiſes that have appeared upon them. The numerous writers who have fabricated fanciful and deſtructive ſyſtems, may be ſuffered to ſink in the gulph of oblivion, never to emerge.

In natural philoſophy, the airy fabrics of hypothetical viſions ought not to claim the attention of a moment. The ſun of Newton has abſorbed the radiance of all other luminaries in this department. His works and thoſe of his followers will, of courſe, ſuperſede the infinite number of folios, which, to uſe the expreſſions of Horace, may be ſent to wrap up frankincenſe and perfumes, the only way in which they can now be uſeful. He to whom the works of the great philoſopher are unintelligible, may acquieſce

with security in the illustrations of Pemberton and Rowning. The lover of natural history, zoology, and botany, will not be at a loss in the selection of books, while fame resounds the names of Buffon, of Pennant, of Linnæus. The romances of Pliny and his imitators will have no charms with the lover of truth.

To the classical scholar, the proper books are usually pointed out by the superintendants of his education; and when once he has tasted them, his own refined feelings will direct him in the choice of modern productions. Every one knows who were the best authors in the Augustan age; and the chief caution necessary is, that the text of a Virgil, a Horace, an Ovid, may not be lost in the attention given to the tedious comments of a few Dutchmen. I have known those who have toiled through the classics, *cum notis variorum*, much less acquainted with them than he who never read them but in Sandby's edition. In attending to Burman and Heinsius, the overlooked the text; which was lost like a jewel in a dunghill. These laborious annotators explain what needs not explanation, and with a little critical knavery pass by a real difficulty without notice. I am convinced that a taste for the classics is rather impeded than promoted by the Dauphin edition, in which boys are initiated; but in which the words of the author are choked, like wholesome plants among weeds, by the notes and interpretation. To be possessed of comments on the classics is however desirable, for difficulties will sometimes occur which at first sight perplex the most ingenious; but I should prefer, for common reading, such editions as that of Jones's Horace.

Directions for the formation of the lady's library have often been wanted by those, who, with an inclination for the elegant amusement of reading, have been unable to indulge it without danger, because they had none to guide them in their choice. In my humble opinion, the following books might have a place in it, not only without hazard of ill consequences, but with great advantage to taste, and to that personal beauty which arises from mental. All the periodical publications of repute that have been written on the model of the Spectator; Rollin's works, Plutarch's Lives,

Shakespear, Milton, Pope, and the most esteemed historians of their own country, may be strongly recommended. To these for the sake of embibing a classical taste, may be added the best translations of the ancients, Pope's Homer, Dryden's Virgil, and Melmoth's Pliny. If French books are required those of Boileau, Fontenelle, Le Pluch, and some select pieces of Voltaire and Rousseau, may with propriety be admitted. Novels, it is feared, will not be dispensed with: those then of Richardson and Fielding are allowed, yet not without reluctance. Every thing indelicate will of course be excluded; but perhaps there is not less danger in works called sentimental. They attack the heart more successfully, because more cautiously. Religious books will find a place, but not without restriction; for there is a species of devotional composition, which, by inflaming the passions and imagination, contributes to corruption, while it seems to promote the warmest piety. From their sensibility of heart, and warmth of fancy, the softer sex is supposed to be most inclined to admit the errors of mystics and enthusiasts.

No. CLXXV. CURSORY REMARKS ON THE ODYSSEY, ON POPE'S TRANSLATIONS, MR. SPENCE'S ESSAY, &c.

IT is generally agreed, that the Odyssey is inferior to the Iliad. It is thought by Longinus, as well as by other critics, to have been the production of Homers old age, when it may reasonably be supposed the ardour of his genius was in some degree abated. "In the Odyssey," says that "critic, "he may be justly said to resemble the setting "sun, whose grandure still remains without the original "heat of his beams. Like the ocean, whose very shores, "when deserted by the tide, mark out how wide it some-"times flows; so Homer's genius, when ebbing into all "those fabulous and incredible ramblings of Ulysses, shews "plainly how sublime it once had been. I am speaking "of old age, but it is the old age of Homer,"

It is certain, that if the Odyssey is not to be placed in

the same rank with the Iliad, so neither ought it to obtain so low a class as to be overlooked and disregarded. It has, however, been neglected by the moderns, and they who have been able to repeat the Iliad, have scarcely deigned to read the Odyssey. Every school-boy is acquainted with the anger of Achilles, and its consequences, while he neither knows, nor is solicitous to learn, the adventures of the wise Ulysses: though wisdom it may be supposed, would be commonly a better model for his imitation than valour.

An ingenious writer has endeavoured to vindicate the Odyssey from the neglect in which it has long lain; but a prepossession in favour of established customs, has hitherto prevented our public schools from substituting it in the room of the Iliad. That the Iliad should be neglected, is not indeed to be wished, but that it should engross our whole attention, to the utter exclusion of the Odyssey, is certainly unreasonable.

The Iliad presents us with a rough prospect, like that of high mountains, craggy rocks, and foaming cataracts, while the Odyssey exhibits a softer scene, and suggests ideas similar to those which arise from the landscape, where all is mild, serene, and beautiful. The one is like the pictures of Poussin, the other like those of Claude Lorain. A reader admires the Iliad, but he loves the Odyssey.

The works of Homer appeared so early in the world, and since their appearance have been so frequently praised and illustrated, that at this late period it is not necessary to add to the general panegyric. Suffice it to recommend the perusal of a few authors, which may clear the way to the study of the Odyssey. Among these are the papers in the Adventurer on this subject, Pope's Notes to his Translation, and above all Mr. Spence's very elegant and ingenious Essay. As to the Translation itself, it abounds with faults and absurdities. Without derogating from the merit of Pope as an original poet, we may venture to pronounce his Odyssey a paraphrase, rather than a just translation of Homer. The copy no more resembles the picture, than the portrait on a sign-post usually resembles the personage intended to be exhibited. The chief beauty of Homer is simplicity, which, in the Translation, is sacrificed to a gaudy

glare, and artificial embelliſhments. As a poem conſidered by itſelf, it has many beautiful paſſages; but as a tranſlation, it is perhaps unworthy the reputation it has obtained.

To cenſure ſo celebrated a name, might appear arrogant in an individual, were he not ſupported by many and judicious critics. Mr. Spence, whoſe opinion is deciſive, and *inſtar omnium*, points out defects in Pope's Tranſlation, which could never have eſcaped ſo great a poet but from haſte and wearineſs. In this work, Pope was aſſiſted by inferior writers; but as the whole is publiſhed under his name, he will ever be anſwerable for its faults. The tranſlation of the Iliad, though a very excellent model of verſification, exhibits not a juſt picture of the ſimple, yet magnificent, Mæonian.

Mr. Spence's Eſſay, at the ſame time that it will exhibit the deformities of the Tranſlation, will inſpire a taſte for the beauties of the original; and, indeed, the general remarks, which are interſperſed with the greateſt judgment and elegance, will contribute to teach a juſt method of criticiſm in almoſt every ſpecies of poetry.

Mr. Spence was a truly claſſical writer. He was no leſs amiable in his manners than pleaſing in his productions. That he chiefly wrote in dialogue is to be lamented; for that form, where the perſons are fictitious, has ſeldom been approved in England, though it has often ſucceeded in France.

No. CLXXVI. THOUGHTS ON THE OEDIPUS TYRANNUS OF SOPHOCLES, AND SEVERAL CIRCUMSTANCES RESPECTING THE GRECIAN DRAMA.

OF the three Greek dramatic poets, Sophocles is the moſt celebrated; and of the productions of Sophocles, the Oedipus Tyrannus is the moſt excellent. It has ſtood the teſt of the ſevereſt criticiſm. The unities of time, place, and action, are inviolably preſerved: and while the tragedy ſatisfies the critic, who judges it by the laws of

Ariſtotle, it pleaſes the common reader and ſpectator, who forms his opinion from the feelings of his nature. Never was there a tale more affecting than that of Oedipus, and never was it told more pathetically than by Sophocles. Many a tear has it excited from an Athenian audience, whoſe hearts were ever finely ſuſceptible of the ſentiments of humanity: but the beſt tranſlation of it would not equally pleaſe in a modern theatre. Many other cauſes of its failure may be aſſigned, beſides that ſimplicity, artleſſneſs, and incomplexity of fable, which the taſte of the moderns is too much vitiated to reliſh.

In the firſt place, it muſt be conſidered, that every original compoſition muſt loſe ſomething of its beauty from the beſt tranſlation. It is a common remark, that the ſpirit of an author, like that of ſome eſſences, evaporates by transfuſion. Foreign manners and foreign cuſtoms are ſeldom underſtood by a common audience, and as ſeldom approved. The majority of an Engliſh audience are unacquainted with ancient learning, and can take no pleaſure in the repreſentation of men and things which have not fallen under their notice. Add to this, that they love to ſee tragedies formed on their own hiſtories, or on hiſtories in which they are in ſome manner nearly intereſted. When Shakeſpeare's hiſtorical dramas are repreſented, they feel as Engliſhmen in every event; they take part with their Edwards and Henries, as friends and fellow-countrymen; they glory in their ſucceſſes, and ſympathize with their misfortunes. To a ſimilar circumſtance may be attributed part of the applauſe, which the Athenians beſtowed on this tragedy of Sophocles; for Oedipus was king of a neighbouring country, with which the Athenians were always intimately connected either in war or peace.

Theſe conſiderations ſhould teach us to content ourſelves with admiring Sophocles in the cloſet, without attempting to obtrude him on the ſtage, which muſt always accommodate itſelf to the taſte of the times, whether unreaſonable or juſt, conſiſtent or capricious.

In truth, the warmeſt admirer of ancient Greek poetry muſt acknowledge a barrenneſs of invention in the choice of ſubjects. The Trojan war, and the misfortunes of the

Theban king, are almoſt the only ſources from which thoſe great maſters of compoſition, Homer, Æſchylus, Euripides, and Sophocles, have derived their ſubject matter. They have, indeed, embelliſhed theſe little parts of hiſtory with all the fire of imagination and melody of poetry; but is it not ſtrange, that in a country like Greece, where the reſtleſs ſpirit of military virtue was continually forming noble deſigns, and atchieving glorious exploits, the poets could diſcover no illuſtrious deed worthy of being painted in never-fading colours, but the worn-out ſtories of a wooden horſe, and a ſphinx's riddle? It is difficult for an age like the preſent, which hungers and thirſts after novelty, to conceive that an audience could ſit with patience during the recital of a ſtory which all muſt have heard a thouſand times; eſpecially as it was adorned with the meretricious artifices of players, with thunder and lightning, hail and rain, tolling bells, and tinſil garments.

But the fameneſs of the ſtory in the Grecian poets became agreeable to the audience, through that veneration which every record of ancient hiſtory demands. That the ſtory on which a dramatic poem is founded, ſhould not be of modern date, has, I think, been laid down as a rule. Nor is it the precept of an arbitrary critic, but is juſtified by nature and reaſon. Imagination always exceeds reality. The vulgar could never prevail upon themſelves to look on ſcenes, to the reality of which they have been eye witneſſes, with the ſame ardour as on thoſe which they have received from their anceſtors, and have painted with the ſtrongeſt colours on their fancy. In obedience to this rule, the Greek poets took their ſubjects from ancient facts univerſally known, believed, and admired: and the audience entered the theatre, to behold a lively repreſentation of the picture already formed in their own imagination.

A modern reader has not a preparatory diſpoſition of mind neceſſary to receive all that pleaſure from theſe compoſitions, which tranſported an ancient Greek. He does not glow with that patriotic ardour which he would feel on reading glorious deeds of a fellow-countryman, when Homer repreſents a hero breaking the Trojan phalanx and encountering a Hector. He does not conſider an ancient

Theban or Athenian involved in the guilt of undesigned parricide or incest, nearly enough connected with him to excite his sympathy in a violent degree; but all these feelings in a Grecian audience, occasioned by a Grecian sufferer, account for that uncommon delight which they took in their dramatic representations, and for their freedom from that satiety which might otherwise have been occasioned by the reiteration of a simple tale.

An English audience has lately shewn itself not so averse from the ancient tragedy, as was expected, by its favourable reception of Elfrida and Caractacus, written on the Grecian model; but, perhaps, this event is not so much to be attributed to the revival of the refined taste of an Attic audience, as to the insatiable avidity of something new. The English are as fond of the *kainon ti* in literature, as the Athenians were in politics: but whether caprice or reason, whether taste or fashion, gave them a favourable reception on the English stage, it is certain that Elfrida and Caractacus are elegant dramas, formed exactly on the ancient model, and may be read with great advantage by those who wish to entertain a just idea of the Greek tragedy without a knowledge of the language.

No. CLXXVII. CURSORY REMARKS ON SOME OF THE MINOR ENGLISH POETS.

WE are told, in the epistle to the Pisos, that poetical mediocrity is intolerable; yet we find that poets, of inferior merit as well as fame, are read with pleasure.

It is true, indeed, that the loudest melody of the grove is poured forth by the lark, the blackbird, the thrush, and the nightingale; but it is no less true, that their pauses are often filled by the sweet warblings of the linnet and the redbreast. The lofty cedar that waves on the summit of the poetic mountain, seems to eversha dow, and exclude, by its luxuriance, all other vegetation. He, however, who approaches it, will find many a violet and primrose springing at its root. He will often discover, amid a plentiful growth

of weeds, a modeſt flowret lifting its humble head, and becoming more beautiful by ſeeming to conceal the native ſweetneſs of its odour, and the luſtre of its hues.

The firſt dignities in the poetical commonwealth are preoccupied by ſuch writers as Spenſer, Milton, Dryden, and Pope; but, at the ſame time, the numerous ſubaltern ſtations are frequently filled with honour.

Many poets of original beauty were in their own times ſo obſcure as to be now totally unknown. Such are the authors of our moſt popular ballads, the general reception of which is a proof of their excellence, more convincing than the deciſions of criticiſm. The learned poet has commonly owed much of his excellence to imitation; but the ballad-writer drew only from his own reſources when he ſung the wild wood-notes of nature. Their metre often poſſeſſes a kind of harmony quite different from claſſical verſification; yet, at the ſame time, truly pleaſing to the uncorrupted ear.

Of poets once known and admired, ſeveral are fallen into total diſrepute. Drayton was honoured by a commentator who muſt have given fame to any writer. If Selden's taſte was equal to his learning, Drayton is indeed moſt highly diſtinguiſhed. The Polyolbion is, however, no more read; and the ſlow length of the tedious Alexandrine in which it is written, will prevent its revival, as it has haſtened its oblivion.

The Gondibert of D'Avenant has been the ſubject of critical controverſy from the time of its publication. Its plan was originally defended by the great Hobbes, and its execution has been greatly praiſed. Yet few have attended to it with any pleaſure, and ſtill fewer have had a degree of patience ſufficient to bear them through the peruſal of it. The truth is, the ſtanza which he adopted, is better ſuited to elegiac than to heroic poetry. A beautifully deſcriptive paſſage, interſperſed in the courſe of two or three hundred lines, will not alleviate the tedium of the reſt; as an occaſional flaſh of lightning cannot illuminate the continued gloomyneſs of an extenſive proſpect.

For the honour of Engliſh literature, moſt of the poetical productions which were admired in the reign of Charles, ſhould now be conſigned to everlaſting oblivion. They

diſplay, indeed, a ſportive licentiouſneſs of fancy, but they are incorrect beyond the example of any age. Some of the beſt poets of the times, among whom were Mulgrave, Dorſet, and Roſcommon, though poſſeſſed of wit and taſte, produced nothing worthy of immortality. The morals of the age were as licentious as the taſte; and the love of pleaſure introduced an indolence, which admitted not an application ſufficient to give the laſt poliſh of correct elegance.

The ſtudy of the ancients, and of the French, has gradually refined the national taſte to a degree of faſtidious delicacy; and writers who have poſſeſſed claſſical beauty have been read with admiration, though they have had nothing to recommend them to the notice of a Charles the ſecond or a Sedley.

The number of minor poets who diſplayed great merit, yet who ſeem to have derived it all from imitation, is too tedious to enumerate. Philips and his friend Smith were correct and claſſical in a degree ſuperior to their contemporaries. Philips has performed the taſk of imitation, with an accuracy of reſemblance ſcarcely equalled by any of his followers but Browne. The Phædra and Hippolitus of Smith has ever been eſteemed a fine poem, and the beauty of the ſtyle, and harmony of the verſe, induce us to regret that he lived to finiſh ſo few productions.

Within the ſpace of half the laſt century, a deſire to imitate the excellent modles of our more celebrated bards, has crouded the middle ranks with a multitude too great to obtain, even for the deſerving individual, any very diſtinguiſhed fame. One poet has ariſen after another, and ſupplanted him as the wave ſucceeding ſwallows up the wave that went before. Moſt of them have exhibited an harmonious verſification, and have ſelected a profuſion of ſplendid expreſſions; but have in general been deficient in that noble fire, and thoſe ſimple graces which mark originality of genius. They are, however, read with pleaſure, and ſweetly fill up the intervals of avocation among the buſy and commercial world, who are not acquainted with the Greeks and Romans, and with whom novelty often poſſeſſes the charm of beauty.

There is a force and solemnity in the poems of Tickell, which at least place him on a level with his patron as a poet. His Collin and Lucy is one of the most sweetly pathetic poems in the language.

Broome, though honourably associated with Pope in the work of translation, seems to have had scarcely any other merit than this to bear him down the stream of time.

Trapp wrote Latin verse with elegance, and was a good critic; but it has been observed of his Virgil, that he had done wisely to have stopped at his preface.

The genius of Collins seems in some measure to have resembled that of Tickell. Dignity, solemnity, and pathos, are the striking features of his compositions. None but a true poet could have written the song over Fidele in Shakespeare's Cymbeline.

The English Tibullus, Hammond, has written truly elegant verse; but I know not whether his representations greatly affect the heart, though they are approved by the judgment and imagination. They have, however, served as patterns for the love-sick nymphs and swaines who delight in giving vent to their passion in the language of poetry.

Love and its effects were beautifully described by the elegantly sensible Lord Lyttelton. To assert that he was remarkable for poetical genius, were to lessen, by endeavouring to exaggerate, his praise. Force, fire, and exuberance of invention, were not his excellencies; but that equable beauty of sentiment and diction, which results from an elegant mind. The graces distinguish his compositions, as the virtues marked his honourable life.

Moore's Fables display indubitable marks of genius; but he wants the simplicity of Gay and Fontaine. He shews, however, a talent for description, which would have shone in the higher kinds of poetry; and a delicacy of mind, which, it might be supposed, could be acquired only in a higher sphere than that in which he was born.

Genius and learning were possessed in a very eminent degree by Merrick. He had that peculiar kind of genius which qualified him to excel in the department of sacred poetry. It is to be wished, that his version of the Psalms were adopt-

ed in churches, where the congregations are learned and polite, not only in the place of Sternhold and Hopkins, but of Brady and Tate. Such an event would be no less advantageous to piety, than to taste.

No. CLXXVIII. CURSORY AND UNCONNECTED REMARKS ON SOME OF THE MINOR GREEK POETS.

THE intrinsic graces of the classic writers have charmed every mind which was susceptible of the beauties of spirit, taste, and elegance. Since the revival of learning, innumerable critics have employed themselves in displaying the beauties which they felt, or in removing the difficulties and obstructions which retarded their progress in the perusal of the ancients. At present, their is scarcely any room for criticism on them; and the most laborious commentator finds, with regret, his profoundest researches, and his acutest remarks, anticipated by the lucubrations of former critics; but as there is scarcely a greater difference between the features of the face, than between the faculties of the mind in different men, and as objects must strike various feelings in various manners, the works of taste and genius may, on different reviews, furnish inexhaustible matter for critical observation. Upon this principle, authors of the present age venture to add to the labours of their predecessors, without fearing or incurring the imputation of vanity or impertinence.

The present remarks shall be confined to some of the Greek Minor Poets, without minutely attending to chronological, or any other order.

In the union of dignity with sweetness, of melody with strength, the Greek is better adapted to beautiful composition, than any modern language. The Italian has all its softness, but wants its force. The French possesses elegance and expression, but is deficient in sound and dignity. The English is strong, nervous, flowery, fit for animated oratory and enthusiastic poetry, but abounds with Saxon monsyl-

lables, ill adapted to expreſs the muſic of mellifluous cadence. To compare the Dutch and the German with the language of Athens, were to compare the jarring noſe of grating iron, with the ſoft warblings of the flute. The other languages of Europe are equally unfit for harmonious modulation, and indeed cannot properly be examined in this place, as the people who ſpeak them have not yet diſtinguiſhed themſelves by any writings truly claſſical.

The Greek Epigram naturally falls firſt under our preſent conſideration. Of theſe little compoſitions, which owe their origin to Greece, none can be inſenſible of the beauty whoſe taſte is not vitiated by the leſs delicate wit of the modern Epigrammatiſt, Indeed, to reliſh the ſimple graces of the Greek Epigram, the taſte muſt not be formed upon the model even of the celebrated Martial. Among the Latin poets, Catullus approaches neareſt to the Greeks in this ſpecies of compoſition.

The Anthologiæ, ſtill extant, are written by various authors, and there are ſcarcely ſufficient Epigrams of any one, to diſcriminate his manner from that of others. Suffice it to remark in general, that their beauty does not often conſiſt in a point, or witty conceit, but in a ſimplicity of thought, and a ſweetneſs of language.

The golden verſes of Pythagoras, though not remarkable for ſplendour of diction, or flowing verſification, are yet highly beautiful in the conciſe and forcible mode of inculcating morality, and virtues almoſt Chriſtian. The earlier philoſophers of Greece conveyed their tenets in verſe, not ſo much becauſe they aſpired at the character of poets, as becauſe precepts, delivered in metre, were more eaſily retained in the memory of their diſciples. Pythagoras has compriſed every neceſſary rule for the conduct of life in this little poem, and he that commits it to memory, will not want a guide to direct his behaviour under any event: but though the morality of theſe verſes is their more valuable beauty, yet are they by no means deſtitute of poetical merit.

That generoſity of ſoul which ever accompanies true genius, has induced the poets and philoſophers, of all ages, to ſtand forth in the cauſe of liberty. Alcæus, of whoſe merits from the monuments of antiquity we may form the

moſt exalted idea, firſt raiſed himſelf to eminence by a poem, intitled Staſiotica, a violent invective againſt tyrants in general, and Pittacus, at that time the tyrant of Athens. It has not eſcaped the general wreck, and we have only a few broken ſpecimens of this celebrated writer's works preſerved by the ancient grammarians. We muſt therefore be content to learn his character from the judicions Quinctilian, and the learned Dionyſius of Halicarnaſſus: the former of whom aſſerts, that he was conciſe, ſublime accurate, and in many reſpects reſembled Homer: the latter, that he had a grandeur, brevity, and ſweetneſs, equally blended throughout all his compoſitions.

Steſichorus, according to Quinctilian, was remarkable for ſtrength of genius. He gave to lyric poetry all the ſolemnity of the Epopœa. Had he known how to reſtrain the impetuoſity of his genus, it is ſaid he would have rivalled Homer: but, unfortunately, the noble warmth of his temper urged him beyond the bounds of juſt writing, and he ſeems to have failed of excellence by a redundancy of beauties.

The fragments of Menander are ſufficiently excellent to induce every votary of learning to regret the loſs of his works. Some indeed have thought, that Time never gave a greater blow to polite literature than in the deſtruction of the Commedies of Menander; but as Terence has preſerved his ſpirit and his ſtyle, perhaps the want of the original is compenſated by the exact copyings of that elegant author. Quinctilian, from whoſe judgment their is ſcarcely an appeal, has repreſented Menander as alone ſufficient to form our taſte and ſtyle. The few remains, preſerved by Stobæus, whether the beauty of ſentiments, or the purity of the diction, be regarded, muſt be pronounced uncommonly excellent. They are, however, too generally known to require illuſtration.

Simonides is characteriſed by Longinus as a poet remarkable for the pathetic. Of his writings very few have ſurvived the injuries of time. The litttle poem on Danaë is, however, ſufficient to juſtify the judgment of Longinus. Nothing can be more delicately tender, or more exquiſitly pathetic. There is ſomething inexpreſſibly pleaſing to the

mind, in the repreſentation of a mother addreſſing a ſleeping infant, unconſcious of its danger, with all the endearing blandiſhments of maternal fondneſs.

The other remarkable poem of this author, which time has ſpared, is of a very different kind. It is a Satire on Women, and is well known by a proſaic tranſlation of it, inſerted in the Eſſays of a celebrated modern writer.

Aleman of Laconia is another melancholy inſtance of the depredations which the hand of time has made on the moſt valuable works of antiquity. Of this author, once celebrated throughout Greece, quoted by the learned, and repeated by the fair, ſcarcely the name is known in the preſent age. Athenæus, Hephæſtion, the ſcholiaſt on Pinder, Euſtatnius, and plutarch, have vindicated him from abſolute oblivion, by preſerving a few of his fragments. Love verſes, which ſince his time have employed ſome of the greateſt writers, and have been admired by the moſt ſenſible readers, were of his invention. All who proceeded him had invariably written in hexameter. He ſubjoined the elegiace verſe, and may juſtly claim the honour of having invented that ſpecies of poetry, which Ovid and the other Latin elegiac writers have ſince advanced to a moſt pleaſing ſpecies of compoſition.

Archilochus wrote iambics and elegiacs; the former, ſatirical; the latter amorous. That he ſucceeded in his attempts, we have ſufficient reaſon to conclude from the teſtimonies of the greateſt critics of antiquity, Horace and Longinus. There is not enough of him remaining, to enable us to form a judgment of the impartiality of their deciſion, and we muſt be contented to acquieſce in their authority.

Lucian ſays, in one of his Dialogues, that the poets have given Jupiter many of his moſt pompous epithets, merely for the ſake of a ſonorous word to fill up a verſe. The hymns of Orpheus abound with theſe expletives; and the reader is often diſguſted with ſounding verſe almoſt deſtitute of ſenſe. If, however, they were compoſed for muſic, they may paſs uncenſured by ſome: for it ſeems to have been generally and moſt abſurdly agreed, and it is obſervable at this day, that very little attention is to be paid to the words

of Operas, Odes, and Songs, which are written merely for muſic. The poems of Orpheus, if thoſe which are extant are like all his productions, would certainly move no ſtones. What has been ſaid of the hymns of this poet, may be extended to many other Greek compoſitions of the ſame ſpecies. General cenſure will, however, ſeldom be juſt, and it muſt be confeſſed, that there are ſome among them, particularly thoſe of Callimachus, truly ſublime and beautiful.

There was a ſpecies of poetry among the Athenians, which, in ſome meaſure, reſembled many of our Engliſh ballads. At the approach of a war, or after a victory or defeat, the poets and ſtateſmen uſually diſperſed among the people ſome ſhort compoſition, which tended to animate them with courage, or to inſpire them with joy. Solon, the wiſe legiſlator of Athens, was too well acquainted with the power of poetry over the human heart, to neglect this efficacious method of enforcing his laws, and propagating his inſtitutions among the lower ranks of the Athenians. There are ſtill extant ſome of his pieces, which bear internal marks of having been purpoſely written to give the people a paſſion for liberty, to inſpire them with a love of virtue, and to teach them obedience to the laws. They are, indeed, written in the elegiac meaſure, but have nothing of the ſoft amorous ſtrain which diſtinguiſhes the Ovidian elegy. They are manly, moral, and ſevere. By theſe, it is a well known fact, the Athenians were animated to reſume a war which they had dropt in deſpair; and in conſequence of the ardour which theſe inſpired, they obtained a complete victory over their enemies.

Tyrtæus wrote in a ſimilar ſtyle, but entirely confined himſelf to martial ſubjects. So ſtrongly is military valour, and the love of liberty, enforced in his little compoſitions, that it would by no means be abſurd to attribute the victories of the Grecians over the Perſians, as much to a Tyrtæus, as to a Miltiades or Themiſtocles. The effects of ſuch political ballads have been frequently ſeen among the Engliſh in time of a war. Every one has heard of Lillabullero—Many a poor fellow has been tempted to quit the plough and the loom for the ſword, on hearing a ſong in praiſe of Hawke or Wolfe roared by his obſtreperous companions,

These verses are too deficient in point of elegance to admit of quotations, and the frequent opportunities of hearing them from the mouths of the vulgar, render repetition in this place unnecessary. The bards of Grub-street are commonly the authors of our martial ballads; but at Athens they were written by poets, statesmen, and philosophers. We may judge of the influence of their productions, by the powerful effect of our rude and even nonsensical rhymes.

Few ancient authors have been less read than Lycophron. His obscurity not only retards, but disgusts the reader; yet, perhaps, his want of perspicuity, though highly disagreeable to the student, is an excellence in a work consisting of predictions. Prophesies and oracles have ever been purposely obscure, and almost unintelligible. The mind that attends to these uninspired predictions of paganism, voluntarily renounces reason, and believes the more as it understands the less; but whether Lycophron is to be praised or censured for obscurity, certain it is, that on this account, he will never become a favourite author. Notwithstanding the labours of the great Potter, he is still difficult, and will probably continue to repose in dust and darkness, amidst the dull collections of antiquated museums.

The poems of Bacchylides, however he is neglected by the moderns, were highly honoured by an ancient, who was esteemed a complete judge of literary merit. Hiero hesitated not to pronounce them superior to the odes of Pindar, which have been generally celebrated as the utmost efforts of human genius. The opinion of Hiero may, however, be questioned, with an appearance of justice, when it is considered, that his character, as a critic, was established by his courtiers, who, to gain his favour, might not scruple to violate the truth.

The gay, the sprightly, the voluptuous Anacreon is known to every reader. His subjects, and his manner of treating them, have captivated all who are susceptible either of pleasure or of poetry. There is, indeed, an exquisite tenderness, delicacy, and taste in the sentiments; but I have always thought he derived no small share of his beauty from the choice of expressions, and the peculiar harmony

of his verſes. It has been objected to him by rigid moraliſts, that his writings tend to promote drunkenneſs and debauchery. But this objection might in ſome degree be extended to a great part of the fineſt writers, ancient and modern. A man of ſenſe and judgment will admire the beauties of a compoſition without ſuffering its ſentiments to influence his principles or his conduct. He will look upon the more licentious ſallies of Anacreontic writers, as little *jeux d'eſprits* deſigned to pleaſe in the hour of convivial feſtivity, but not to regulate his thoughts and actions in the ſerious concerns of life. Whatever may be the moral tendancy of his writings, it is certain that as a poet he is unrivaled in that ſpecies of compoſition which he adopted. Many have been the imitations of him, but few have ſucceeded. The joys of love and wine have indeed been deſcribed by his followers, but their touches are more like the daubings of an unſkilful painter, than the exquiſite traits of a maſterly hand. Cowley, whoſe genius certainly partook more of the Anacreontic than of the Pindaric, has been one of his happieſt imitators, for he is rather to be called an imitator than a tranſlator: but the Engliſh reader will not form a juſt idea of the merits of Anacreon, from thoſe Bacchanalian ſongs which ſo frequently appear under the title of Anacreontic.

The paſſion of love was never more ſtrongly felt or deſcribed than by the ſenſible Sappho. The little Greek ode, preſerved by Longinus, the metre of which derives its name from her, has been tranſlated by Mr. Philips with all the air of an original. The Latin tranſlation of Catullus appears much inferior to that of our countryman. The Greek indeed is much corrupted, and, as it now ſtands, is leſs pleaſing than the Engliſh. Every one, who on reading it recollects its occaſion, muſt lament that ſo warm a paſſion, ſo feelingly repreſented, was excited by an improper object. She wrote alſo a tender hymn to Venus.

Scaliger, whoſe judgment, though ſometimes called in queſtion, ought certainly to have great weight, beſtowed very extraordinary praiſes on the writings of Oppian; a poet who, though he has been compared to Virgil in his Georgics, is only peruſed by the curious in Grecian litera-

ture, and is known only by name to the common reader. The emperor Caracalla, under whom he flouriſhed, is ſaid to have been ſo charmed with his poems, as to have ordered him a ſtater for each verſe. Modern critics will, however, dare to call in queſtion the taſte of Caracalla. The works of Oppian conſiſted of halieutics, cynogetics, and exeutics, the latter of which have periſhed by the injuries of time. He was a grammarian, which in the ideas of the Greeks, meant a profeſſed ſcholar; and in every age, the poems of men who profeſſed literature, have been leſs admired than the vigourous and wild productions of uncultivated genius. The former are contented to avoid faults, but genius labours after beauties only. Apollonius is more correct than Homer, and Jonſon than Spakeſpeare; but Apollonius and Jonſon are coldly approved, while Homer and Spakeſpeare are beheld with aſtoniſhment almoſt equal to idolatry. It ſhould however be remarked to the honour of Apollonius, that the judicious Virgil borrowed ſeveral of his moſt celebrated ſimilies from him, and perhaps he is not to be ranked among the *poëtæ minores*. Oppian has met with the uſual fate of grammarians, and has ſcarcely been read; but the reader of taſte will yet find many paſſages, which if they are not ſublime, he muſt confeſs to be beautiful.

Tryphiodorus has been introduced to the Engliſh reader, by the excellent tranſlation of the ingenious Mr. Merrick. Homer he certainly imitated, and has ſucceeded in the imitation. Copies taken by great maſters, though inferior in general yet in ſome parts commonly rival their originals. Tryphiodorus reaches not the ſublimer flights of the Mæonian bard, but he ſometimes follows his leſs daring excurſions at no diſtant interval. It is enough to recommend him to general approbation, that with a moderate portion of Homer's fire, he has more correctneſs He may be read with advantage not only in a poetical, but in an hiſtorical view. Where Homer diſcontinued the thread of his ſtory, Tryphiodorus has taken it up. Indeed this poem is a neceſſary ſupplement to the Iliad, without which the reader is left unſatisfied. Tryphiodorus is ſaid to have written another poem, called *odyſſea leipogrammate*, in which he has omitted, through each book, the letter which marked

the number of it. Such a kind of compoſition is trifling, and beneath a man of genius; but it muſt be allowed to be a work of great difficulty, and conſequently a proof of great application. Nor ought it to injure the character of Tryphiodorus as a poet, but to be viewed as the wanton production of an ingenious, but ill-employed grammarian. If Homer wrote the Battle of the Frogs and Mice, and Virgil deſcanted on his Gnat, without loſing the dignity of their characters; inferior writers may indulge the inoffenſive ſallies of wim, without the imputation of folly or puerility.

In the peruſal of ſome of theſe, and other of the minor poets, whoſe works are extant, the lover of the Grecian Muſe finds a pleaſing variety, after reading the more ſublime and beautiful productions of Homer.

No. CLXXIX. A CONCLUDING ESSAY.

THE writers of periodical papers have uſually ſubjoined, at the cloſe of their lucubrations, an account of the origin and progreſs of their work, explained the ſignatures of correſpondents, and aſſigned each paper to its proper claimant.—I am now arrived at the end of the ſecond volume, the boundary preſcribed to my excurſions; but I have, I believe, no information of this kind remaining to be communicated. I have already accounted for the origin of this work, and intimated that the compoſition of it has ſerved, at various times, and in different ſituations, to amuſe a few intervals of literary leiſure; and with reſpect to aſſiſtants and correſpondents, the nature of the undertaking could not poſſibly admit them. If, therefore, any praiſe ſhould be thought due, it muſt come undivided, and contribute to leſſon whatever ſeverity of cenſure may be incurred, the whole weight of which muſt fall without participation.

I mean not, however to delude myſelf with an idea of influencing a reader by apologies: the ſubmiſſions and excuſes of authors are of little importance; the Public claims

an uncontrovertible right to decide for itſelf on every compoſition which ſolicites regard; and its final deciſions are uſually no leſs juſt than immutable.

Inſtead then of dwelling on ſuch topics, I will take leave of the candid reader, if any reader ſhould have had patience to accompany me ſo far by a ſummery recapitulation, and perhaps addition of a few admonitions which may be ſalutary. I pretend not to collect all the ſcattered remarks which have preceded, into one point of view, but merely to repeat and add ſuch as may poſſibly occur in filling up the paper which now lies before me. I hope the egotiſm will be pardoned on this and ſeveral other occaſions, as it is by no means eaſy at all times to ſpeak in the third perſon of one's ſelf, without evident affectation.

I have endeavoured, throughout the whole ſeries of theſe Papers, to warn thoſe who are entering into life (and to them my admonitions are chiefly addreſſed) againſt the faſhionable examples of the *rich and great vulgar*, which often militate againſt all that is decent, regular, virtuous, and learned. Unleſs we are taught in our youth to be on our guard againſt their deſtructive influence, we ſhall certainly incur imminent danger of corrupting our principles and practice, by a blind and bigoted imitation. Experience daily evinces, that without this precaution, all the advantages of a virtuous and learned education, all the documents of paternal care, all prudential, moral, and religious reſtraints, may be totally fruſtrated. The rich and great may be conſidered as beacons on a promontory; and if they hang out deceitful lights, they who will allow no other ſignal to direct them (and the number of theſe is infinite) will probably be miſguided in the voyage of their lives, till they are daſhed on rocks, or ſunk in whirlpools. I think I can confidently declare, that I was not influenced by ſplenetic or envious motives, when I attacked the pride, folly, and wickedneſs of the *nominal great*, who juſtify every enormity, under the name of faſhionable indulgence; but that I have been actuated ſolely by a ſincere conviction that ſuch an attack is the moſt effectual means of promoting the intereſt of virtue. Even an enemy will allow that it is not the moſt approved method of advancing private intereſt.

If I have at any time indulged an asperity of censure, it has arisen from an honest detestation of vice, meanness, selfishness, and insolence, in those whose example is seducing, and consequently most injurious. The rank and opulence of worthless persons has had no other effect on me than to excite additional indignation. If any feel themselves hurt by my animadversions, their very pain is a proof that they suffer deservedly. Nothing in this book can make a worthy man my foe; and with respect to the unworthy, I fear not their power, and I despise their malevolence.

In adopting modes of address and external behaviour, the study of which appears to engross the attention of many, I have advised the young man to begin his work at the foundation; to correct his heart and temper, that the graces of his appearance may proceed from that copious and infalliable source of whatever is pleasing, a disposition truly virtuous and unaffectedly amiable. I have exhorted him to avoid servility, adulation, preferment-hunting, and meanness of every kind; to endeavour indeed to please those with whom he converses, but to let the endeavour arise from benevolent motives, from an human and Christian desire of diffusing ease and happiness among the children of one Almighty Father, and the partakers of the same miserable nature. I have advised him to be firm, yet gentle,—manly, yet polite: to cultivate every ornamental accomplishment which leads not to effeminacy, and to study to be as agreeable as possible, while he can be at the same time sincere; to despise, and most studiously avoid, that common but base character, which, with motives peculiarly selfish and contracted, pretends to uncommon good-nature, friendship, benevolence, and generosity; whose assiduities are proportioned to the rank or fortune of the persons whose favour is courted, without the least regard to virtue or attainments; whose politeness is that of a valet or French dancing-master; and whose objects, after all its professions and pretensions to liberality, are no less mean and dirty than those of a Jew-usurer. I have advised him to value the approbation of his own heart, and the comforts of a clear conscience, above the smiles, the applause, and the rewards of a vain, a wicked, a deceitful, and a transitory world.

In literature, I have recommended the union of taſte with ſcience, and of ſcience with taſte; a ſelection of the beſt authors on all the ſubjects which claim his particular attention; a love of originals, and a due diſtruſt of tranſlations; a conſtant effort to obtain depth and ſolidity; a preſerving, regular, indefatigable induſtry, eſpecially in the earlier periods of a ſtudious courſe, not only becauſe no diſtinguiſhed excellence can be obtained without it, but alſo becauſe a cloſe attention to ſtudy, and an ardent love of letters in the juvenile age, is a great preſervative of innocence, and conduces much to the diverſion or extinction of paſſions and tendencies, which cannot be habitually indulged without ſin, ſhame, and miſery.

The general tenor of the moral admonitions of this book, has been to urge the young man to labour inceſſantly in overcoming the natural propenſity of human nature to evil: to aim at perfection, though he knows he cannot reach it; to aim at it, becauſe he will thus approach much nearer to it than if he gives up the purſuit in the timidity of indolence: to have courage enough to withſtand ridicule the weapon of the wicked in their ſubtil attacks upon virtue: to beware of the refinements of ſophiſtry, and to be humble enough to learn his duty both to God and man, from the plain doctrines of his catechiſm: to beware alſo of the ſeducing influence of faſhionable vice; of thoſe unfortunate perſons who, from a want of education, or from fooliſh pride, *live without God in the world* and even in contradiction to the obvious precepts of natural religion; exiſting in a ſtate which might almoſt be called the vegetable, if it did not in a greater degree participate of brutality. Addreſſes of a ſerious kind are to them, for the moſt part, uſeleſs, as that pride, ſelf-conceit, and ſelf-importance, which leads them to adopt with oſtentation the tenets of infidelity and the practices of immorality, uſually renders them deaf and blind to all repreſentations which come *unrecommended by opulence, rank, and libertiniſm.* They are wiſer in their own eyes, though they often neither read nor think, than the wiſeſt moraliſts who have yet appeared. But the young man who has been taught not to be dazzled by the falſe luſtre of their characters, will ſoon learn to pity their er-

rors and ſhun their example. It is a juſt remark, which has been made by men intimately acquainted with the living world, that more are ruined by vices which they have adopted through vanity and ſilly imitation, than to which they have been ſeduced by the violence of paſſion and temptation. He who leſſens the force of ſuch examples, and obſcures thoſe gloſſy colours which they derive from high ſtations and large fortunes, greatly promotes the cauſe of morality, and contributes much to prevent the miſery and ruin of a riſing generation.

In forming political principles, I would uniformly maintain the expediency of always leaning to the ſide of liberty and the people, and of withſtanding, by all legal and rational means, the encroachments of power. All men who poſſeſs power, well eſtabliſhed and confirmed, are naturally inclined to extend and engroſs it. Let a ſpirit then be conſtantly encouraged among the people at large, which may lead them to a jealous vigilance over the poſſeſſors of power, and animate them to a manly reſiſtance on the ſlighteſt infringement of liberty. But at the ſame time, we muſt not ſuffer the artful purſuers of their own intereſt to delude us by a name enchanting in the ſound: we are bound to conſider, in our diſpaſſionate moments, the nature of liberty; to ſee and acknowledge the neceſſity of ſubordination, and the happineſs of being governed by the equitable operation of impartial laws; to conſider the preſervation of good order and public tranquility as greatly conducive to the perpetuation of liberty, when it is once eſtabliſhed on a ſolid baſis: to diſtinguiſh between a real love of liberty, and a mere impatience of controul, which is found to prevail in the boſom of envious and malignant men: to diſcern the difference between real patriotiſm and a ſelfiſh oppoſition to preſent authority, in whomſoever inveſted, ariſing from a hope of partaking of it on ther deprivation: to remember that experience has abundantly confirmed the remark, that the loudeſt advocates for liberty, while out of power, are often the moſt arbitrary and tyrannical, both in the exerciſe of power, when they have obtained it, and in their private lives and natural diſpoſitions: to beware of the needy adventurer in politics, who has nothing to loſe,

and has no profpect of gain but in demolifhing the fabric raifed by others, and enriching himfelf in the general plunder. Such cautions can never be too frequently repeated to the middle ranks, who have been miferably deluded by the wicked pretenfions of pfeudo-patriotifm.

I have endeavoured to evince the propriety of appointing men of private virtue and good character to the great, honourable, and efficient offices in the various departments of the ftate. It is difficult to conceive but that the accumulation of public honours and emoluments on profeffed infidels,on notorious gamefters,and on infamous debauchees, is at once deftructive of morality, religion, and national profperity. The promotion of notorious gamefters, infidels, and debauchees, to high offices of truft and honour; of men publicly known for the enormous profligacy of their private lives, argues a want of fincerity in governors, and eventually tends, more than any foreign enemy, to fhake their thrones from under them. Such appointments counteract, in the minds of the majority of a people, all the precepts of religion and morality. Refiftance, indeed, under governors who act, in their appointment of miniflers and officers, as if they confidered the national religion merely as a mode of fuperftition, and morality as a bafelefs fabric of fancy or policy, and who yet affume the management of the church as well as of the ftate, and claim the title of Defenders of the Faith, becomes virtue inftead of treafon, and patriotifm inftead of rebellion. He who militates by all legal means againft fuch men, engages in a rational and an honourable croifade. No Turk was ever a greater enemy to the religion of Jefus Chrift, than fuch *moft facred* and *moft Chriftian* Governors.

It is certainly right to difbelieve and to reprobate all pretenfions to public virtue, wherever private virtue is *notoriouflv* deficient. Where private virtue is wanting, there can be no foundnefs of principle, and, without foundnefs of principle, no real virtue of any kind can fubfift. Patriotifm in a bad man is but difguifed wickednefs, of a moft malignant nature, and ufually proceeding from a deceitful, a proud, an envious, a jealous, a cruel, and a felfifh difpofition. The boafted abilities of profligate and corrupt cha-

racters, are often but the desperate efforts of a distress which has overcome all diffidence, and restraint, and leads men to fight their way to promotion, by noise, effrontery, and overbearing presumption.

We all, indeed, love power, and it is an useful impulse which urges us to aspire at eminence; but though we may reasonably wish for a share of power, let us learn the virtue not to obstruct its salutary operation in the hands of others, merely because it is not in our own. The truest patriotism may often be evinced, by subduing the lust of power, by submissive silence, and by cheerful acquiescence, in a contented retirement, and in an humble exercise of the private and social virtues. The lust of power, like all other lust, is often most violent in diabolical dispositions, and the turbulent spirit which it produces is the bane of society.

But amidst our cautions, we shall do well constantly to remember that liberty, with all its attendant evils of faction and sedition, is, upon the whole, infinitely more conducive to the happiness and to the improvement of human nature, than the tranquil repose of established despotism. An arbitrary government diffuses a benumbing, freezing, soporific influence over the human faculties, especially in the middle and lowest walks of life; and there is no danger or inconvenience which ought not to be cheerfully incurred to destroy it from the face of the earth. The tree of liberty, so well planted and watered in America, will, I hope, flourish more and more; and impart many a slip and sucker to grow in climates which now appear most ungenial to its cultivation. In our own island, we must never neglect the opportunity afforded by a time of distress, to correct the abuses of the constitution, and to push back the gigantic strides of power, with its auxillary, corruption, Such are the auspicious periods, the golden moments, in which a portion of new health is to be infused into the vitals of the body politic: such the times in which the people themselves ought to amputate excrescences, and purge that corrupting influence which contains the seeds of disease and death to a free commonwealth; in which the right of election should be communicated to all who pay taxes to a certain amount, petty boroughs disfranchised, and counties

enabled to send a number of members in proportion to their size, wealth, and populousness; in which Old Sarum should no longer be permitted to constitute as many representatives of the people of England as the county of York, and half as many as the metropolis of the empire. But as all great political changes are attended with danger, the British senate evinces its wisdom in its reluctance to introduce them without the maturest deliberation.

It is impossible to recapitulate all the variety of suggestions which have preceded, or to make any great addition to them, in the limits of a single paper; neither was it my original intention. It is sufficient that a few of the most important points are touched upon in the conclusion of these volumes, with a view to leave a due impression on the mind of the reader, who may be induced, for want of something better, to bestow an idle hour on their perusal. The subjects of Behaviour, Letters, Morals, and Politics, have been already mentioned: it would be a reprehensible omission not to have reserved a place for a few hints on Religion.

It appears to me to be one of the most important precepts in forming our religious principles and ideas, not fully to depend on the conclusions of our own reason; to distrust the acutest understanding; to be really humble; to reverence the opinions received by our forefathers; to remember the shortness of life, the imbecility of human nature, and to accept with pious hope, rather than with disputatious curiosity, the comfortable doctrines and promises of the received Revelation. It will be a great inducement to this prime virtue of humility, to reflect on the diseases and pains both of mind and body incident to our nature; on the terrible degeneracy into which we may fall, when deserted by the grace of God; and, at the same time, on the consolation and improvement of heart which may be, and is derived, under every calamity and on the bed of death, from sincere devotion; to pray for faith when doubts arise; to beware of that weak and wicked vanity which instigates the deistical and sceptical pretenders to superior powers of reasoning, to write and publish their sophistical and presumptuous tenets on the national religion. Let us

ever remember that common but excellent maxim, that we can lose nothing but what would hurt us, and may gain every thing that is valuable, by receiving, with humble hope, the religion of Jesus Christ.

Upon the whole, and after all the subtle disquisitions of proud philosophy; all the inventions which owe their origin to malice, vanity, or ingenuity; all the whimsical modes of living and thinking which fashion dictates for the employment of her idle hours, or for the gratification of her full-blown pride; the plain virtues, as they are understood by plain men of honest hearts and good faculties, improved by a competent education, are the best security for comfort under all the circumstances, and in all situations of human life. Sedentary and recluse persons may amuse themselves, in the reveries of inactivity, with speculative refinement and sceptical subtleties; but they who are really wise, and earnestly wish to obtain all the happiness of which they are capable in this sublunary state, must descend from the elevated regions of sophistry, and labour to acquire, with the assistance of common sense and common honesty, the virtues of faith, humility, piety, and benevolence.

I am happy in the opportunity of adding my testimony, inconsiderable as it may be esteemed, that all plans of conduct, and prospects of happiness, independent of these virtues, must terminate in vanity and vexation; and that these will supply a perennial fountain of such consolation as the world can neither give nor take away.

FINIS.